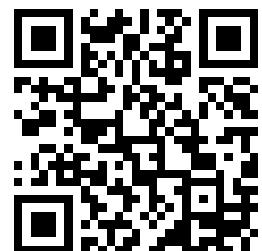

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HISTORY OF 8th NORTH STAFFORDS

WITH FOUR PORTRAITS,
EIGHT GROUP PHOTOGRAPHS,
SIX PLANS AND
A LARGE MAP OF NORTHERN FRANCE.

1624

34



Chewett, F.

History of the 8th North Staffords

*With Four Portraits,
Eight Group Photographs,
Six Plans, and a
Large Map of Northern France.*



By Appointment.

HUGHES & HARBER, LIMITED.
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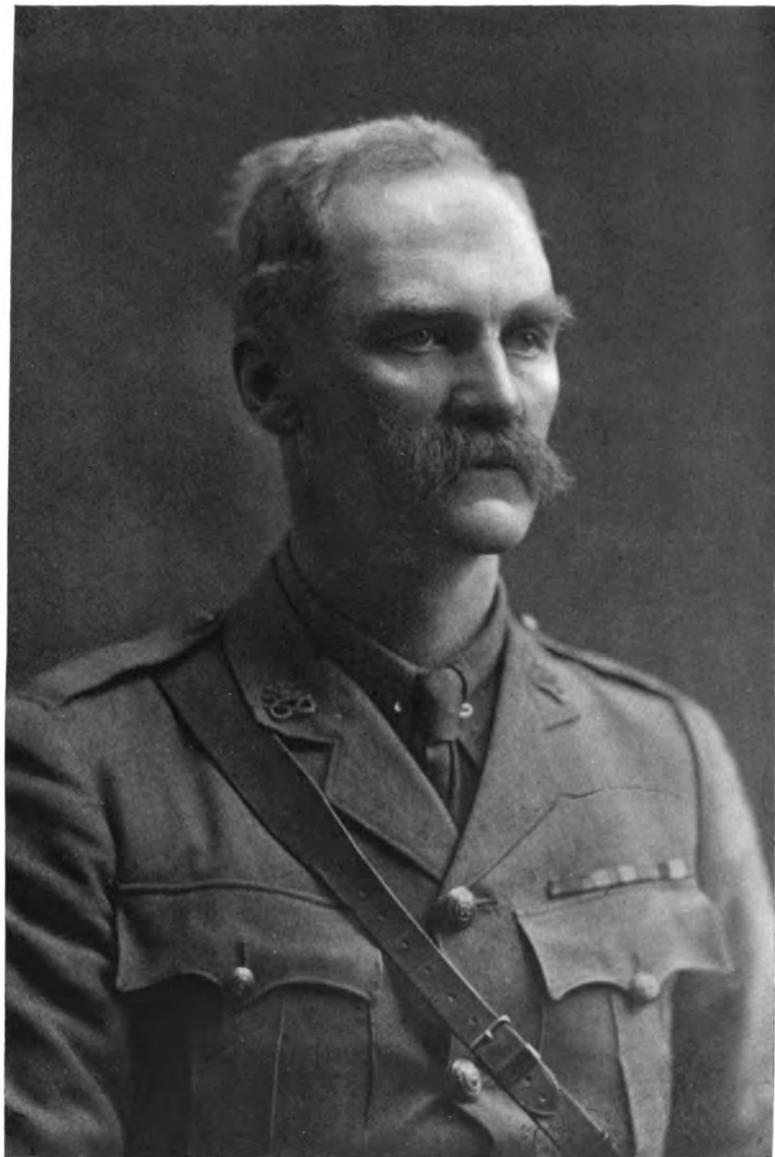
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CROIX DE GUERRE FRANÇAISE.

The 8th North Stafford Regiment may be proud of the distinction of having materially assisted in the winning of this War Honour for the 56th Infantry Brigade. Many of these awards were made by our French Allies to the British Army for individual acts of gallantry, but there is no parallel in the memory of the writer of the honour having been conferred on a British Fighting Unit as a whole.

The part played by this Battalion is set forth in the following pages in the period concerned.



MAJOR CECIL WEDGWOOD, D.S.O.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
Introduction	...	7
I. Formation and Early Training	...	9
II. Embarkation, Trench Warfare, etc.	...	12
III. SOMME	...	35
IV. MESSINES—SOMME	...	48
V. WYTSCHAETE—MESSINES RIDGE	...	56
VI. CAMBRAI Front	...	68
VII. KEMMEL—MARNE	...	76
VIII. BETHUNE—CAMBRAI	...	84
IX. Demobilization	...	89
X. Conclusion	...	93
Appendix I.	...	97
" II.	...	99
" III.	...	101
" IV.	...	102

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

IN the collection of data for the publication of this book an immense amount of trouble has been taken to ensure accuracy as to facts and figures, but in spite of this the authors cannot guarantee that it contains no mistakes.

The lists published in the Appendices will be found to be accurate in the main, but they have been compiled under great difficulties, and any omissions or inaccuracies can only be regretted.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

	FACING PAGE
PORTRAITS.	
Major Cecil Wedgwood, D.S.O.
Lieut.-Colonel W. J. Locker
Lieut.-Colonel H. W. Dakeyne, D.S.O.
Captain W. A. Meir
GROUPS.	
Officers at TIDWORTH
N.C.O's at Tidworth
Battalion on March (near ESTAIRES)
Officers, 1916
Officers, 1917
H.R.H. the Prince of Wales :—	
March Past
With Officers
Inspection
MAPS AND PLANS.	
ORCHARD SALIENT
MERVILLE—BETHUNE AREA
FESTUBERT AREA
RICHEBOURG L'AVOUÉ
POPE'S NOSE SECTOR
DUCK'S BILL SECTOR
LARGE MAP OF NORTHERN FRANCE	<i>Supplement at end.</i>

INTRODUCTION.

Letter from Major-General Thomas Astley Cubitt, C.M.G., D.S.O.

THE 8th Battalion Prince of Wales's (North Staffordshire) Regiment proceeded to France in July, 1915, and remained there until the end of the War. The Battalion was especially fortunate in having as its Commanding Officer Lt.-Colonel H. W. Dakeyne, D.S.O., Royal Warwickshire Regiment, during almost the whole period of its most strenuous fighting, namely, from November, 1916, until the cessation of hostilities.

My personal acquaintance with the Battalion was from April, 1917, to May, 1918, whilst in command of the 57th Infantry Brigade, of which the 8th North Staffords formed a part.

Always imbued with high soldierly qualifications and a fine fighting spirit, always keen and reliable, never afraid of hard and often dreary work under singularly unpleasant conditions, this Battalion fairly earned for itself a name and reputation as illustrious as any Battalion in the Armies in France. I can call to mind vividly the following few selections from the many occasions on which the Battalion especially distinguished itself whilst under my command.

On the 7th of June, 1917, during the capture of OOSTAVERNE, on the MESSINES RIDGE, the 57th Brigade having gained the final objective for the day, was ordered at very short notice to make a further advance of 2,000 yards. The 8th North Staffords, though placed in support of the attack, obeyed the general instructions to "stick to the barrage like wax" so literally that they passed through the two leading Battalions and arrived first on the objective, capturing many prisoners and guns. The following day the Battalion, on its own initiative, made a series of "mopping up" wide forward sweeps, to such good purpose that the only part of the whole MESSINES attacking front not counter-attacked by the enemy that night was that held by the 57th Brigade.

On the 5th of August an enemy attack near HOLLEBEKE made a breach in the line on the left of the 8th North Staffords, which Battalion, by a locally organised prompt and vigorous counter-attack, regained the lost ground and handed it back to their neighbours.

On September the 20th, in front of HILL 60, the Battalion was on the left of the 57th Brigade attack, in very boggy ground, with their own left flank in the air, and carried out successfully a most difficult operation, capturing many prisoners and machine guns.

INTRODUCTION.

On the 30th of December, troops on the right of the 8th North Staffords were attacked in great strength on WELSH RIDGE, near CAMBRAI, and the enemy succeeded in gaining valuable ground. The 8th North Staffords had meanwhile been subjected to an intense bombardment in front and in enfilade, and were also attacked; but their front remained intact, and the Battalion prevented a serious break being made in our line.

On the 10th of April, 1918, at dawn, during a heavy fog, the enemy in overwhelming numbers over-ran our advance posts and captured MESSINES RIDGE, the 8th North Staffords, by a brilliant counter-attack and moving with parade precision, recaptured part of MESSINES RIDGE and half the village, holding their ground until ordered to withdraw thirty-six hours later: a most meritorious performance.

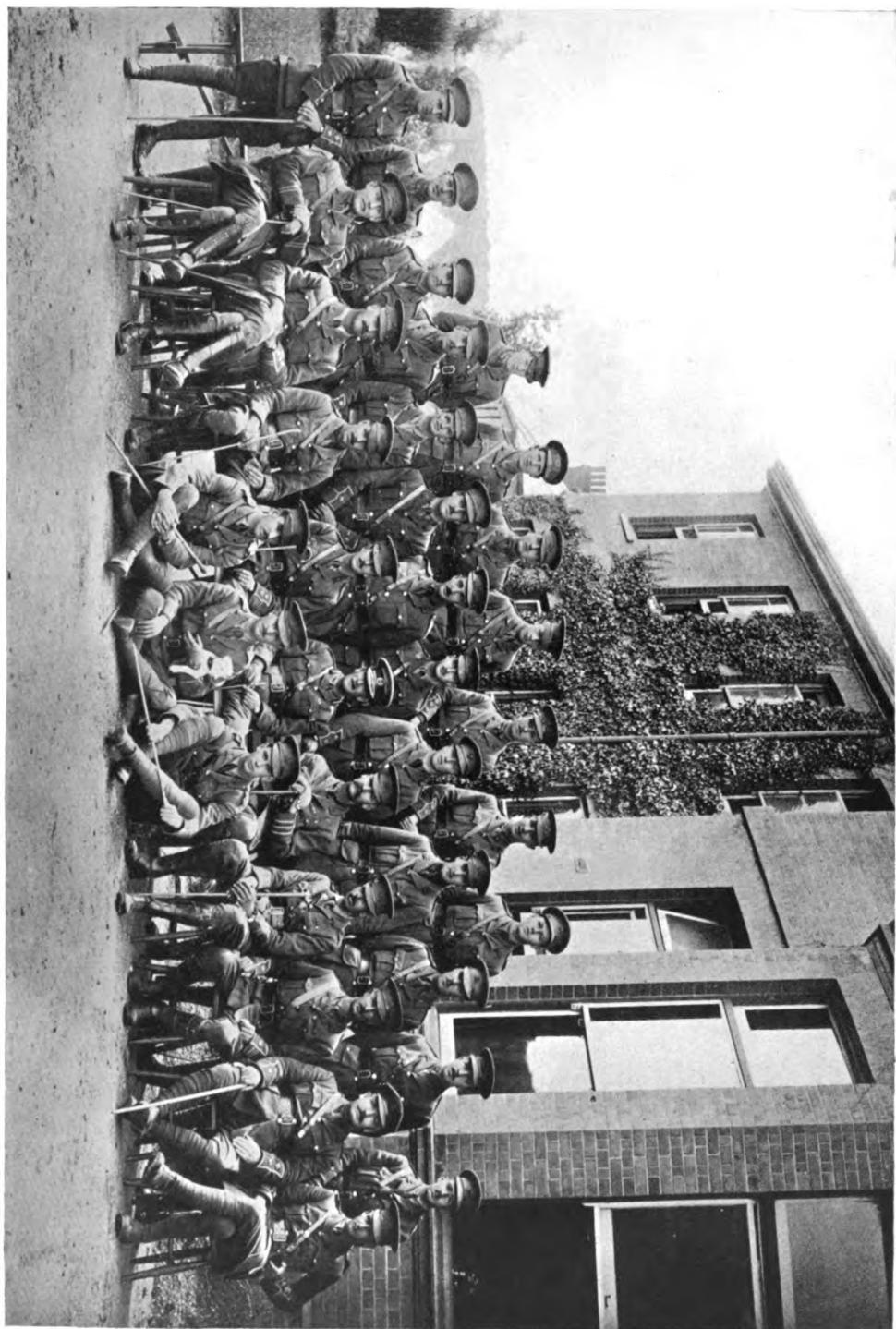
The above are written from memory and diary, three years after the events, and are of necessity incomplete; nor do the narratives do adequate justice, even during the periods specified, to the brilliant performances of the Battalion.

The 8th North Staffords were invariably smart, happy, and contented. It was an honour to command them, and a pleasure to serve with them, and I shall always feel the same great personal affection for the Battalion that I experienced whilst they were under my command.

T. ASTLEY CUBITT,
Major-General.

20th September, 1920.

OFFICERS AT TIDWORTH.



CHAPTER I.

FORMATION AND EARLY TRAINING.

THE 7th and 8th Battalions of the North Staffordshire Regiment were among the earliest of the "First Hundred Thousand," their numbers being completed by the end of August, 1914.

They were recruited on the initiative of Major Cecil Wedgwood, inspired and advised by General Sir Alfred Hickman, D.S.O., under whom he had served in SOUTH AFRICA.

When War was declared, Major Wedgwood (then aged 51), who was on the General Reserve of Officers, immediately sent in his name to the War Office as prepared to undertake Active Service. Naturally no immediate answer was forthcoming, and, as the days went by, he became impatient from the feeling that there was an overwhelming amount of work to be done, which he might help to do if he could but get the necessary permission. It somehow came to his ears that General Hickman was raising a Battalion for the New Army, and he immediately telegraphed to ask if he could be included in it. General Hickman explained that the appointment of officers was not within his powers, and suggested that Major Wedgwood should set about raising a Battalion in his own district, adding that he would himself be delighted to give him every advice and help as to the best method of procedure.

Authority to recruit was received on the 12th August, and after a day spent with General Hickman the work was begun with enthusiasm. Besides holding many meetings in the POTTERIES, Major Wedgwood sent his daughters to arrange meetings for him in various small towns and outlying villages in the neighbourhood, at which he was present and spoke, sometimes as many as four meetings being addressed in one day. Recruits poured in, and although many joined the existing six Battalions of the North Stafford Regiment or the other branches of the Service, the new Battalion (the 7th North Staffords) was completed in eight days. It would be interesting to know whether any other Battalion was raised in a shorter time, or whether this constitutes a record.

Major Wedgwood announced to the War Office that the Battalion was completed, and applied for a Commission to serve with it. To his disappointment the answer was a telegram, "Carry on. Raise another Battalion." He said anxiously, "I HOPE they're not going to say I'm too old for anything but a recruiting officer!" But he went on with his work, and in eleven days another Battalion (the 8th North Staffords) was completed and another appeal for a Commission had gone to the War Office.

The question of finance had also to be considered. Theoretically, of course, this was entirely a matter for the War Office, but at the best of times the War Office is not celebrated for its expeditious methods, and in the existing circumstances, with so many weighty matters to consider, it was hopeless to expect that the minor needs of a new unit could receive prompt attention. It was clear that some ready money would be essential to the well-being of the new Battalion. This was promptly provided by a donation of £150 from Mrs. Godfrey Wedgwood, followed early in 1915 by another £150, and there is no doubt that in many ways this timely gift of £300 contributed materially to the efficiency as well as to the comfort of the Battalion.

While waiting for his Commission Major Wedgwood established himself at LICHFIELD to help Colonel Prior, O.C. the Depôt, who was completely overwhelmed by the sudden rush of work. Whittington Heath in those days was black with recruits sleeping out and living out, because there was no accommodation for them at the Barracks—no room, no food, no clothing, no equipment. There was naturally no Staff and no organization to deal with such an unprecedented state of things; but as soon as the position was realised other retired officers rallied to Colonel Prior's assistance, and had put in several weeks of most strenuous work before anyone had found time to authorise their presence.

The absence of uniforms complicated matters in an amusing way—more amusing perhaps to the lookers-on than to the officers who were trying to cope with the situation. On one occasion a draft was to be sent to JERSEY, where the 4th North Staffords were in training. The 200 men required were duly selected and enrolled, and set off to march the three miles to LICHFIELD Station; but on the way they met friends and acquaintances, new recruits, on their way up to report at Barracks. "Where are you going, Bill?" these would enquire. "To JERSEY for training." "All right, I'll come too," and the new recruit would fall in. The result was that the Draft which left the Depôt 200 strong, numbered 237 ere it reached JERSEY.

These are trivial matters, but they indicate the spirit in which North Staffordshire "stood up to meet the War."

On the 11th September Major Wedgwood received his Commission as Major in the 7th Battalion, and reported next day at TIDWORTH, where the Battalion was quartered at Bhurtpore Barracks under Colonel Andrus. But within about a week orders were received for his transference to the 8th Battalion, with which he served until his death in action in July, 1916.

When he joined the 8th Battalion, as second in command, it was encamped on PERHAM DOWN, SALISBURY PLAIN, with Colonel Herbert in command and Lieut. A. C. Standbridge as Adjutant.

It was here that the Battalion may be said to have experienced its early difficulties.

N.C.O.'s WHO WENT TO FRANCE WITH THE BATTALION IN JULY, 1915.



The Great War, into which the country had been suddenly plunged, had brought with it a serious shortage of all kinds of materials necessary for the comfort and training of the new units which were brought into being: arms, equipment and clothing, as well as other war materials, had to be more or less improvised, and training was much retarded in consequence. These difficulties were overcome with a cheerful spirit which was really wonderful. The object of everyone of all ranks seemed to be to fit himself to take his place in the field, and this spirit produced that co-operation between officers and men which resulted in such a splendid Battalion being ready for the field in July of the following year.

Very bad weather in December announced the approach of winter. Rain and snow soon gave the Camp the appearance of a sea of mud. Tents, bedding, clothing, etc., were perpetually wet. These discomforts were borne with wonderful cheerfulness, but the health of the troops demanded a change of scene, and the Battalion was moved to WESTON-SUPER-MARE, where accommodation was provided in billets. The change was very much appreciated, and all ranks quickly settled down to their new surroundings. Company, Battalion and Brigade training was continued with renewed vigour. Musketry courses were fired at BRISTOL and CLEVEDON, and a three days' Brigade Manœuvres took place round CHEDDAR and BLAGDON, which culminated with a night (a particularly black and stormy one) in the trenches on a portion of the MENDIP HILLS known as BLACKDOWN.

Other events during this period were the inspection of the Battalion by the Divisional Commander, Major-General Faskin, and of the 57th Brigade by General Sir W. Pitcairn Campbell.

It should also be recorded that the Battalion won the Brigade Football Cup, which was presented by the Brigade Commander, Brigadier-General Twyford.

Just before leaving WESTON the command of the Battalion was taken over by Lt.-Colonel W. J. Locker, of whom more anon.

In April, 1915, the Battalion, whose training was now nearing completion, was moved back to SALISBURY PLAIN and quartered in Bhurpore Barracks, TIDWORTH. Hard training was now the order of the day, and a trained soldier's Musketry Course was fired. A final draft of recruits was received, and arms, equipment, and war stores were issued to the Battalion.

Divisional Training took the form of Field Days, at which Sir A. Paget was a spectator, and in June the Division was inspected by H.M. the King.

It may therefore be said that at the end of June, 1915, the Battalion had completed its training, and at the beginning of July orders to mobilise were received. A final leave of four days was granted to the Battalion from Sunday, the 11th July, and a special train conveyed it to the POTTERIES. The return train on the 14th left STOKE amid scenes of wild enthusiasm, carrying with it many who were destined never to see their homes again.

CHAPTER II.

EMBARKATION, TRENCH WARFARE, Etc.

ON Saturday, the 17th July, 1915, the Battalion entrained at TIDWORTH *en route* for SOUTHAMPTON, and embarked the same evening on the *S.S. La Marguerite*, bound for LE HAVRE, which was reached in the small hours of Sunday, the 18th July, after a pleasant voyage.

The Battalion formed part of the 57th Infantry Brigade, under the command of Brigadier-General Twyford, a highly efficient officer of the North Staffordshire Regiment. The other Battalions of the Brigade were:—10th Royal Warwickshire Regiment, 8th Gloucestershire Regiment, and 10th Worcestershire Regiment. The Brigade formed part of the 19th Division, at this time commanded by Major-General Faskin, and later to make history as the famous “Butterfly” Division. It has been asserted by many that this name was acquired by the Division from the frequency of its flying visits to practically the whole of the Western Front from YPRES to RHEIMS. Wherever the fighting was severe, and the situation called for the attention of first-class fighting troops, the 19th Division was sent, and usually after coping with the situation would fly off to another part of the line.

The Division was commanded in turn by Major-General Tom Bridges, a famous Cavalry Leader who lost a leg in action in 1917, and from then onwards by Major-General D. G. Jeffreys of the Grenadiers. Much might be written about these two famous Generals, but as the object of this book is to set forth the doings of the 8th North Staffords, this passing reference must suffice.

The Officers who accompanied the Battalion to France were as follows:—

Headquarters.—Lt.-Colonel W. J. Locker, Major Cecil Wedgwood, D.S.O., Captain A. C. Standbridge (Adjutant), 2nd Lieut. C. H. Masters (Signalling Officer), Lieut. and Q.M. F. Crewe, R.S.M. G. Hunt, R.Q.M.S. J. Boughey.

A. Company.—Captain R. F. Wynne, Captain F. A. S. Gibson, 2nd Lieut. W. A. Meir, 2nd Lieut. J. B. Gidley, 2nd Lieut. F. G. Yardley, C.S.M. A. Wilson.

B. Company.—Captain J. Carnegy, Lieut. G. R. Ford, Lieut. J. L. Pearson, 2nd Lieut. C. E. Smith, 2nd Lieut. C. E. Pickard.

C. Company.—Captain H. S. Denton, Captain P. B. Purves, Lieut. G. L. B. Lowry, Lieut. F. H. Woolliscroft, Lieut. W. H. Lucas, C.S.M. Lawton.

D. Company.—Major J. B. Farley, Captain E. Reading, Lieut. H. M. Hoskins, 2nd Lieut. R. W. W. Cryan, 2nd Lieut. R. P. Tulloch, C.S.M. King.



LIEUT.-COLONEL W. J. LOCKER.

Lewis Gun Detachment.—Captain J. Leese, 2nd Lieut. A. G. Saunders.

Transport.—Lieut. A. H. Bainbridge.

Bombing Officer.—Lieut. A. G. Lamplugh.

Medical Officer.—Lieut. T. I. Bennett, R.A.M.C.

Special mention might here be made of the following:—

“ Lt.-Colonel W. J. Locker had served with the 1st Battalion of the same Regiment for 15 years, seven of which were spent in INDIA and five years as Adjutant of the 4th Battalion, after which he became second in command on retirement from his regular Commission. He was serving with the 4th Battalion when he was gazetted to command the 8th Battalion. A level-headed, pains-taking and highly efficient officer, he did wonderful work in the final training and organization of the Battalion for active service, and the very fine Battalion owes a great deal of its excellence to Colonel Locker, even though he had only commanded it for a few months prior to its embarkation for France.

“ He commanded the Battalion on embarkation, and continued to command with distinction during the trench warfare period, during which many incidents might well be written concerning him. However, it will perhaps suffice to say that during this period the 8th North Staffords enjoyed the privilege of being considered one of the finest Battalions in the Division. It was in June, 1916, whilst we were completing our training for the SOMME offensive, that the Colonel was taken ill at ST. RIQUER and evacuated to ENGLAND. This was a great loss to the Battalion, from which it took some months to recover. The Colonel, after a very long illness, recovered sufficiently to command a home unit, but did not afterwards command the Battalion. Our sympathies are with him in his misfortune, for with reasonable luck many honours would surely have come his way.

“ After the Colonel had left, the command of the Battalion devolved upon the second in command, Major Cecil Wedgwood, D.S.O., a very able successor. Major Wedgwood might well be called the Father of the Regiment. The Major had twenty years' service with the 4th Battalion, with which he served during the SOUTH AFRICAN WAR. His services in the campaign were rewarded by the grant of the D.S.O. He retired shortly after the cessation of hostilities. From 1902 to 1914 he played an important part in the civic events of the POTTERIES and became the first Mayor of the Federated Borough of STOKE-ON-TRENT. On the outbreak of the Great War he raised the 7th and 8th Battalions in a few days, almost entirely by his own efforts, and accepted a Commission as Major in the 8th Battalion. Although he was offered the command of other Battalions on at least two occasions he preferred the association of Staffordshire men and accepted the lower rank for this purpose. From now he played a most important part in the affairs of the Battalion which was part of his very existence. Everything that a father might have done for his children was done by the Major for the men of the 8th Battalion. He was unceasingly watchful for their comfort and welfare even at the expense of his own. This

state of affairs lasted until the Major paid the extreme penalty as the result of a sniper's bullet at LA BOISSELLE on the 3rd of July, 1916. It is not easy to imagine the shock that the Battalion suffered from the loss of Major Wedgwood. Men who by this time had come to look upon Death very lightly spoke in whispers about the death of Major Wedgwood. His loss to the Battalion was tremendous, and it was only after very careful nursing in other capable hands that the Battalion completely recovered. Our sympathies are with Mrs. Wedgwood and family in their great bereavement. It may, however, be a small consolation to know that the Major died fighting in command of a Battalion of Staffordshire men, the Battalion he loved and lived for. A noble end to a noble life. The end, perhaps, he would have chosen, for he was nothing if not a patriot. Many years ago, whilst discussing foreign affairs and the likelihood of a clash of arms with Germany, he was known to exclaim vehemently, 'I hope I may live long enough to fire a shot at the Germans!'"

The Battalion disembarked at LE HAVRE at 7 a.m. on the 18th July, 1915, and marched to a rest camp about three miles distant, where it was quartered in tents to await the arrival of the Brigade Transport, which arrived the following day. On the 20th July, at 4-30 p.m., we entrained for the front. After a train journey of 23 hours (a very novel experience after travelling on English railways) we detrained at AUDRICQ and marched to billets at MENTQUE and NORBECOURT, about eight miles distant, after which we marched in Brigade to RENESCURE on the 23rd, and MOLINGHEM on the 24th, where a few days rest were taken, during which Sir Douglas Haig inspected the Battalion in billets. The men's feet received medical attention, which became necessary through the combined effects of new boots and long marches. The march was resumed on the 30th, the night of which was spent in billets at HAVERSKERQUE, and on the 31st the march terminated with the arrival of the Battalion in Indian Corps Reserve Billets near MERVILLE, at VIERHOOK (a small village under the shadow of the FOREST DE NIEPPE), which was well within the area of operations.

There had been no outstanding events during the march from the coast, but those who took part in it had many reasons for remembering it. The Battalion was only fresh from home, and unused to the discomforts of active service conditions. The weather was hot, and each man carried about 65 lbs. of kit, which takes more than a little effort to carry on long marches even by soldiers of long experience. This was exaggerated considerably to our men, none of whom had more than ten months' service. The men had many lessons to learn: How to dispose themselves comfortably and quickly, to keep billets clean, to distribute meals equitably from the field kitchens, to wash and repair clothes, to avoid drinking water which had not been specially sterilised (the last the most difficult of all to the town-bred Englishman). These items may appear trifling in themselves, but are nevertheless essential, and, until learned, call for constant supervision. It was the hardening process and we realised it.

At VIERHOOK, at 12 noon, on 2nd August, the Battalion was formed up in line on the MERVILLE ROAD and inspected by Sir James Willcocks commanding the Indian Corps, who afterwards shook hands with each officer and spoke a few words to them.

On the 4th August the Battalion marched to ESTAIRES, where it was billeted and spent an uneventful week, the time being spent in route-marching, physical drill, etc. The thrill of being photographed was experienced on one of these marches, and about 12 months' later the resulting pictures appeared in the Press.

On the 12th August the trench instructional period commenced, each Company in turn going into the line at MAUQUISSART, being attached to the Seaforth Highlanders for 48 hours, to pick up some practical knowledge of trench warfare, and to fit the Battalion as a unit to take its place in the line. During this instructional period each Company was moved nearer to the line to billets at PONT DU HEM, from which place it furnished working parties. This period was not uneventful. Several casualties occurred, and D. Company had (what seemed to them in their lack of experience) an eventful time. On the morning following their arrival in the line the enemy commenced to bombard the line with minenwerfer bombs and completely demolished 50 yards of trench. Only two men (both Highlanders) were lost, thanks to the promptitude with which the Seaforts withdrew the men from the trenches under bombardment. The remainder of the tour passed quietly, and D. Company left the line with only one casualty, Private R. Bryan slightly wounded on his way up to the line.

The Battalion returned to VIER HOOK billets on the conclusion of the instructional trench period on the 19th August. The few hours spent in the line had been most useful to all concerned. They were sufficient to dispel many strange notions of trench warfare, and to teach the real essentials and the necessary routine of trench life. All ranks had derived much comfort from the obvious contempt with which our mentors regarded the enemy. The following eight days were spent in training and marching, usually through the FORET DE NIEPPE, and several parties of Officers spent another 48 hours in the line with Indian troops.

On the 21st August a large working party, consisting of the whole of D. Company and part of C. Company (200 in all), were sent forward to dig near the line under the Royal Engineers. It was whilst in charge of a section of this party, digging a communication trench near the LA BASSEE road, that 2nd Lieut. F. G. Yardley was mortally wounded, the result of a stray bullet. This was the first officer casualty—a very efficient and popular officer and a great loss to the Battalion. There was also an unfortunate accident on the 26th during practice with live bombs, which resulted in two men losing their lives. This was the first accident of the kind in the Battalion, and great sorrow was felt for the men who had lost their lives as the result.

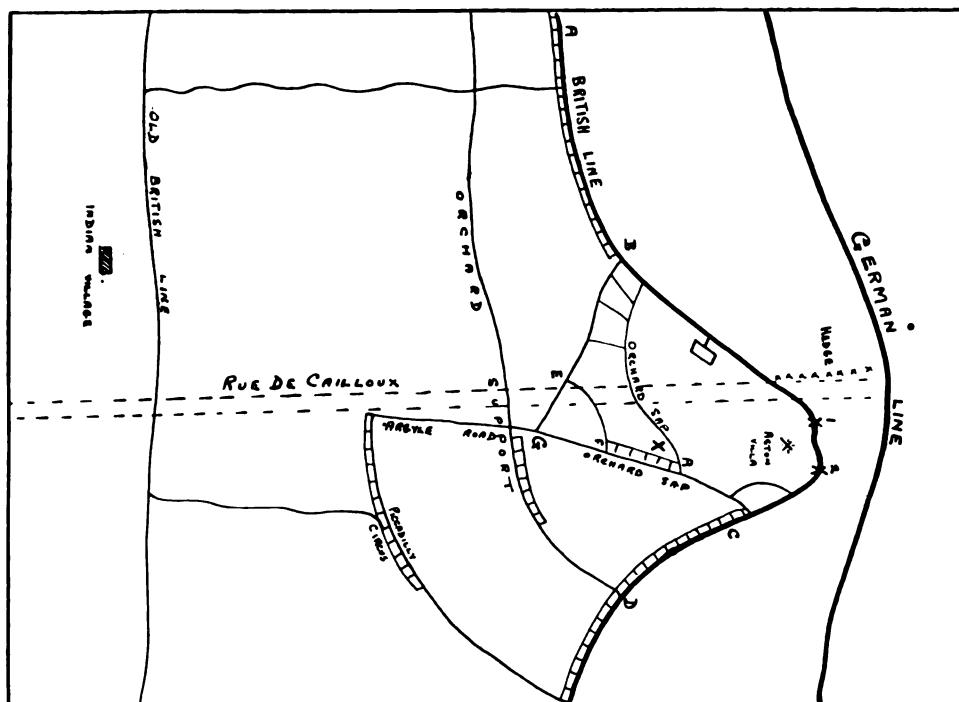
On the 27th August the Battalion may be said to have commenced its duties as a fighting unit, for on that date it moved forward to take its place in the line. A halt of one night was made at PARADIS, and the following day we marched into Brigade Reserve Billets in King's Road near the village of RICHEBOURG ST. VAAST. On the night of 2nd September we moved into the line in relief of the 10th Royal Warwickshire Regiment, and took over a sector known as the Canadian Orchard, a stretch of line between FESTUBERT and RICHEBOURG L'AVOUÉ. Owing to the incoming and outgoing troops having to use the same communication trench, and the complexity of the trenches taken over, it was a most difficult relief, but was accomplished without mishap.

This piece of line derived its name from the fact that it had been taken in May of this year by the Canadians at considerable cost. The general form of the line and the names by which various points in the trench system were known will be best seen from the map.

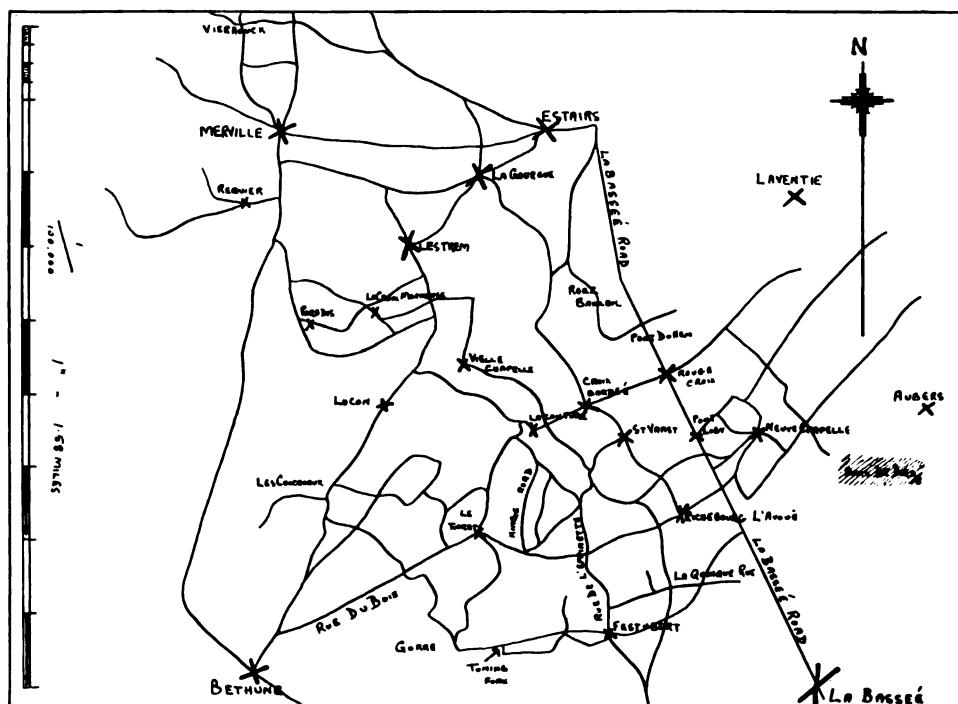
The front line B. to C., the Orchard Sap, and the trench B. E. G. formed the boundary of an orchard of which only the splintered stumps remained. The orchard was quite small, the distance from point G. to apex being not more than 150 yards, while the distance from B. to D. was about the same. At the point of the salient a farmhouse had once stood, but had long since been obliterated; all that remained to show where it had been was some heaps of bricks and twisted ironwork of agricultural and domestic implements. This was called "Aston Villa." The whole of the ground was much torn by shell fire, especially at the apex, where there were many large craters round which the earth had been blown into huge mounds. Here also the scattered remains of barbed wire entanglements were strewn about in all directions.

The trenches were in fairly good condition so long as the dry weather lasted, and did not show any great tendency to collapse. The worst feature of their construction was their extreme narrowness, which rendered it difficult to move about, and almost impossible to move quickly. In many places the parados were low, and this, together with the configuration of the ground, left one in danger in these places of being shot in the back. Throughout the Orchard the dug-out accommodation was insufficient, and no shelter was proof against bombs or shells, most of them being very primitive and insecure.

From the moment of taking over the line until we were relieved eleven days later, we came under a fire from heavy trench mortars, from which there was little respite. The practice of the enemy was to fire a large number of bombs from these weapons during the hours of "stand-to" in the morning and evening, with occasional ones during the day and night. The certainty that these ordeals had to be faced twice a day, the knowledge that an occasional shot might fall upon one unobserved at any moment, and the excitement of scrambling through narrow trenches to escape these missiles whenever they were seen in the air, made the prolonged strain of this, practically the first experience of trench warfare, very great. In addition to bombs the enemy



ORCHARD SALIENT.



MERVILLE-BETHUNE AREA.

sent over frequent bursts of rifle grenades, and shelled at short intervals with H.E., chiefly 4·2 howitzer shells.

This hammering was much harder to endure since there was practically no means of replying to it. There were no rifle grenades. The thirty-pounder trench mortar in the salient rarely fired, having little ammunition, and the field guns had been practically forbidden to fire in order that shells might be accumulated for the coming British offensive. The parsimonious habits of the Artillery at this time are illustrated by the following incident:—

One evening a message was received from the Artillery: "We are going to strafe the RUE DE MARAIS to-night at 11," the RUE DE MARAIS being a road just behind the German line much used by the enemy transport. We pictured to ourselves with great satisfaction the bombardment about to fall on the enemy. When the hour arrived ONE salvo from an 18-pounder battery whizzed over our heads, and then perfect calm! It is not easy to imagine our disgust when it dawned on everyone that the promised "strafe" was finished.

One of the enemy's favourite targets was the apex of the salient between points 1 and 2 (map of Orchard Salient). The trench here had invariably to be rebuilt nightly, only to be destroyed the next day. It was therefore rarely possible to *walk* round the apex, this part of the journey having to be accomplished on hands and knees.

Another outcome of the shelling was the prohibition of fires. The enemy had a keen eye for smoke, which immediately became the target for their shells and mortars. The result of this was that the men in the orchard had to live to a great extent on cold food. To add to the general discomfort rain set in, and soon everyone was wading almost knee deep in water and mud. The most serious part of these conditions was the increased difficulty of dodging bombs.

During the second night in the line the first heavy casualties occurred. There was considerable trench mortar fire, and one bomb fell into portion of A. Company's front line, which unfortunately at that moment held a patrol about to go out in addition to its garrison. Several men were completely buried, and the extreme darkness rendered the work of rescue very difficult. This, however, was carried out under a constant hail of these missiles. Great credit is due to Captain Gibson and his party for their utter disregard of personal safety in the performance of this rescue work, which when completed revealed the fact that 12 men had been killed or wounded by this explosion alone. Inter-company reliefs took place at intervals of three days. B. Company suffered heavily during their tour in the salient.

First honours fell to A. Company. Whilst occupying the salient a large bomb fell in the Orchard Sap. Several men were killed in the explosion, and one man was hurled completely out of the trench, falling on the barbed wire where marked X on the map. (This trench had been constructed to serve as a fire trench in an emergency.) Captain Wynne and Privates Bailey, Breeze and Johnson immediately climbed over the parapet, in full view of the enemy's

line, removed the man and carried him back into the trench. For this brave act Captain Wynne was awarded the M.C., and Private Bailey the D.C.M., and all were warmly congratulated by Brig.-General Twyford, who expressed his appreciation of the gallantry they had displayed.

On September 14th we were relieved by the 7th King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment, and it was not with any feelings of regret that we left the Canadian Orchard. It had been our baptism of trench warfare as a Battalion, and a very memorable one. We had been an unusually long period in the line, but we had come out of it with credit. Casualties had been heavy (84 killed and wounded, including Captain Reading and 2nd Lieut. C. E. Smith), but we now felt that we belonged to a first-class fighting Battalion, that we were capable of doing anything required of us, and a very high standard of *esprit de corps* prevailed. The Battalion was congratulated by Brig.-General Twyford on its cheerfulness and its excellent work in trying circumstances.

From the 14th to 24th September we were billeted at LOCON, a long straggling village near BETHUNE, and quite 10 kilometres from the firing line. None of us dreamt at that time that the enemy would occupy these billets before the War was ended; but this was so, and this Battalion was charged with the most hazardous task of driving him out of it, but of this more in its proper period.

On the 21st we received orders to hold ourselves in readiness to take a small part in the offensive action which was to take place on the 25th September, and which was afterwards to be known as the Battle of LOOS. Our part, however, was so small that it may be passed over very lightly.

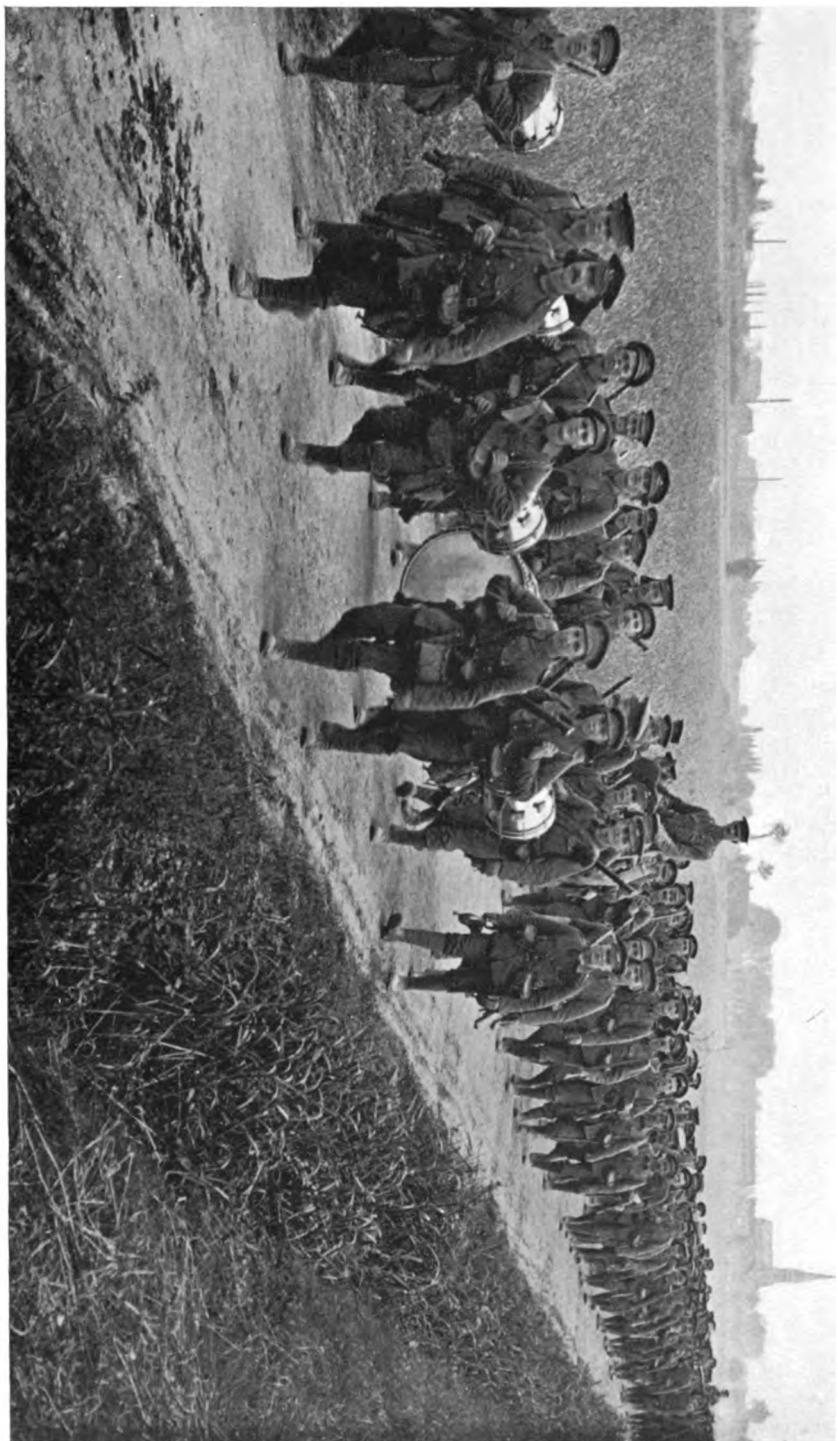
We sat in our excellent billets at LOCON and listened to our three days' bombardment of the enemy's trench system from the 22nd, and on the night of the 24th we moved off as a Battalion to take up position in Corps Reserve. At dawn on the 25th we were in a field near LE HAMEL, where warlike stores and rations were issued, the latter including a liberal and very welcome issue of rum.

A terrific explosion in the immediate vicinity disclosed the fact that "Granny" (a 15 in. howitzer) had fired. The men, who were in an hilarious mood, showed their appreciation by loud cheers after the firing of each shot. This was the largest gun we had seen, and much interest was taken in it and its projectile, which could be seen in the air for a considerable distance after leaving the gun. "That's the stuff to give 'em," was a familiar expression, as "Granny" carried on the good work. Its target was said to be LA BASSÉE, and speculation was rife as to how Fritz was enjoying himself.

The function of the 57th Brigade was to form a reserve, but to whom or what seemed to be very indefinite. However, about 9 a.m., the Battalion marched off in Brigade through GORRE in the direction of FESTUBERT. The march was very slow and halts frequent. All the time motor ambulances were passing from the direction of FESTUBERT, carrying back the wounded of the 58th

*Photograph kindly lent by
Dr. H. D. Girdwood, O.B.E., Realistic Travels.*

BATTALION ON MARCH (NEAR ESTAIRE).



Brigade, who had delivered a very costly holding attack east of the village of FESTUBERT. By the time we reached the "Tuning Fork" it was about noon. We marched along the southernmost road for a few hundred yards, when a halt was made for about three hours. Heavy rain set in, and, as there was no better covering available than ground sheets, the situation became distinctly uncomfortable. The downpour increased as the day advanced, and about 4 p.m. the men were moved into a line of half-completed trenches near by. Travelling kitchens were brought up, and a very welcome hot meal was served. Some shelter was improvised by roofing the trenches with ground sheets, but everyone was wet through and covered in mud, and for the moment the stimulating atmosphere of offensive lost its influence over us. Several times the order to "stand to" was passed round, only to be cancelled, for which we were thankful. About midnight we were ordered back to LE HAMEL, where we arrived in the early hours of the 26th, very wet and disconsolate, after a very trying and apparently useless sort of time, but very thankful to get under cover nevertheless.

The next three days was a period of continuous "wind up," expecting to be sent to join in the attack at some point. Several times orders to "stand to" were issued, and once at least the Battalion paraded and remained under arms long enough to get wet through, when the order to "dismiss" was given. As time wore on it became more and more evident that the attack was fizzling out and that after all we should not be wanted. This was found to be correct, and finally, on the night of the 29th September, we found ourselves *en route* for the trenches east of FESTUBERT (see Map B.) in relief of the 6th Wilts Regiment, and remnants of the 9th Welsh Regiment. The trench system (see Map B.) was little altered from what it was on the 25th, with perhaps only one difference, *i.e.*, the immense quantity of mud encountered everywhere owing to the recent wet weather. The trenches, however, apart from this, were fairly good, and although the structure was old and rotten, it had not suffered much at the hands of the enemy, and the recent rains had not as yet had time to cause extensive damage.

The following three days were spent in the line, during which time the enemy caused very little trouble, fine weather prevailed, and the mud was cleared from under foot, where it had been so deep as to make movement a slow and arduous task, and occasional falls of parapet, etc., were repaired. Considerable progress was also made under the direction of the R.E. in the construction of a new support line, "The Grouse Butts." A few casualties occurred during this tour, caused chiefly by snipers, who were very vigilant in watching for any attempt to bring in wounded and dead from the recent attack, many of whom were still in No Man's Land.

It was during this tour that two valuable officers were lost to the Battalion, Captain Purves and Lieut. Woolliscroft, both being wounded by the same grenade on the afternoon of the 2nd October. They discovered in an old

and at 3 a.m. a violent bombardment was opened on our front by the enemy. For half an hour a torrent of shells was poured on our line. Again good fortune was with us, and the shells, which were shrapnel, caused very few casualties. The expected attack did not take place, very fortunately for the enemy, as every preparation had been made to give him a real hearty reception. A feature of this tour was the active and accurate sniping on the part of the enemy. One extraordinary shot hit two men of A. Company in the head, killing them both, at a range of from two to three hundred yards.

During the afternoon of the 11th October the 8th Gloucester Regiment took over the line, and we were moved back to a line of detached posts along the RUE DU BOIS, and to two lines of reserve trenches in the Albert Road and Edward Road (Map C.). The following four days were uneventful. Nightly working parties were provided for the front line.

On the 15th we were moved back into reserve billets at LACOUTRE (Map A.). Five uneventful days of rest were spent here. We were, however, kept reminded of the War by the daily shelling of the village church, with but poor results.

The short rest came to an end all too soon, and on the 20th we were again trenchwards bound, under the command of Major C. Wedgwood, this time to the FESTUBERT Sector (Map B.) to relieve the 9th Ghurkas. The line was the same as the Battalion held previously, but the distribution of Companies was different.

Two visits were paid to and from the line, and during the whole time very little was done by the enemy that calls for any comment. His Artillery was inactive, and sniping only very occasional, very few men being hit. Once he tried to bombard "Rothesay Bay" (Map B.) with a small mortar, but, finding that his shots were dropping short, he abandoned the effort after a few shots had fallen in No Man's Land. Our patrols approached his line every night, but found nothing to indicate that he ever left the shelter of his own trenches. By day also his observation was not keen, and our men freely exposed themselves without attracting much attention.

The weather, on the other hand, was the all-important factor in life. The first few days were unsettled. There was enough rain to produce a plentiful supply of mud, but not sufficient to cause any falls of parapets, etc., and, as several fine days followed, the line after eight or nine days was everywhere clean and unbroken. The cold, especially at nights, was now felt severely, winter clothing not having yet been issued, and the fuel ration being always inadequate. This was, however, supplemented by parties carrying wood from the old German lines in our rear. Near the end of this tour rainy weather set in, and from thence the conditions became extremely unpleasant. The soft earth crumbled and fell as soon as it became wet. Trenches soon became mere drains, the country being flat and low-lying. It was soon knee-deep in water and mud. The action of the water caused more falls, and in spite of

incessant work the general collapse went on more quickly than repairs could be carried out. Sandbags were pulled from the parapet and laid along the trench bottom in the forlorn endeavour to prevent more earth being churned up into mud, and thus in a very short time the trench, instead of being deep and secure, became very inadequate in the protection it afforded. The Grande Finale occurred a few hours before we were due to be relieved by the 10th Worcester Regiment on the 1st November. Particularly heavy rain set in, and the dissolution of traverse and dug-out was so rapid as to be almost magical. In one Company 27 traverses collapsed in an hour, and the condition of the line when the Worcesters arrived was appalling. Even after the relief was complete it was a struggle to get clear of the line. The communication trenches were waist deep in water and mud. Telephone wires had been dragged down by falling sandbags and formed a horrible entanglement along the trenches, some being level with the face, some holding on to the legs, and others twisting themselves round rifles and equipment. General difficulties were increased by the darkness of the night, which was pitch black. All time tables were upset, and incoming and outgoing troops often met in the communication trenches. In places trench boards had been laid, and here the exhausting struggle was somewhat lessened; but often the boards had floated away and one would suddenly step down into two or three feet of water, and as often as not lose foothold completely.

The labour of this march from the line may be gauged to some extent by the fact that one Platoon of 30 men were four hours in completing the half mile of Barnton Road (Map B.), and one man broke two ribs through a fall and had to be left in charge of a stretcher party.

Platoon by Platoon the weary Battalion struggled back to LE HAMEL, where the old billets were occupied. The four days' rest were spent in cleaning up and removing as far as possible the traces of our late wallowing in mud. During this period rain continued to fall incessantly.

On November the 5th we were again in the line, relieving the 10th Worcesters. It was now almost unrecognisable to one who remembered the attractive trenches of a month ago. The Worcesters had been compelled to fill up the trenches still further with sandbags, and at least half the line was only 4½ feet deep.

If our line was bad, the enemy was apparently in a similar plight, for he was frequently seen throwing mud over his parapet. If, however, he had been active, he might have inflicted heavy casualties. In many places deep pools of water had collected, which could only be crossed in thigh gum boots, only a limited number of which were supplied as trench stores. There were only sufficient to supply carrying parties, and as they had to be worn by men in turn, and were not available during relief, everybody was wet through in spite of them. Reliefs from now onwards were carried out across the open, as the communication trenches were either quite impassable or non-existent. The

journey to the line was therefore accomplished more quickly, but falls into the mud, into shell holes, ditches, and old trenches were frequent, and a state of perpetual wetness resulted. A little incident which occurred in the Lewis Gun Detachment on the 5th November deserves mention.

On the way to the line Private Hodgkinson fell into a trench full of water, which soaked him through from head to foot. He nevertheless carried out his duties during the succeeding four days, clad in a kilt of sandbags. In the early hours of November the 5th he was discovered by the Lewis Gun Officer on the firestep with his gun wearing only a shirt, although it was freezing at the time, singing lustily and perfectly happy. This incident is typical of the hardships of the winter and the spirit with which they were faced.

Rain ceased the day we took over the line, and it was fine but cold during the remainder of the tour. The whole of the time was taken in repairs, and the front line became gradually clean. When we took over the line it would have taken one ten minutes at least to travel 100 yards, a condition of affairs which might have been attended with serious results.

A very fine piece of work by a stretcher bearer of A. Company during this period calls for special notice. Lance-Corporal Harper, a Company stretcher bearer, carried a man who had been sniped just after daybreak from the "Grouse Butts" (300 yards from the German line) in full view of the enemy, who were sniping at him the whole time, to the Battalion aid post. For this and other acts of bravery he was awarded the D.C.M. He was killed in the performance of his duties in the SOMME offensive in 1916.

On November the 9th we were relieved in the line by the 7th King's Own. Rain set in once more just before the relief took place, and we marched to LES CHOQUAUX, LOCON, to our old billets, to the obvious gratification of the inhabitants. Nine days were spent here, during which nothing of note took place, except that whilst out with a working party Lance-Corporal Harper repeated the feat of carrying back a wounded man across the open in daylight.

Several new officers arrived, 2nd Lieuts. Barker, Breeze, R. P. Smith, and Westlake, and Major Farley left to take up an appointment in England.

The 19th Division was now transferred to the 6th Corps, commanded by Lt.-General Haking, in consequence of the withdrawal of the Indian Army from France. The only difference this transfer made to the Battalion was the reduction of the leave allotment, a change which was not much appreciated.

On the 19th November the Brigade took over the line in the vicinity of the "Canadian Orchard." For the first three days we were in reserve, and found some shelter in the battered houses in the RUE DE L'EPINETTE (a road which runs from the RUE DU BOIS to FESTUBERT—Map A.), and on the 21st we relieved the 8th Gloucesters in the line immediately north of the Orchard. The relief was carried out in the open, each man wearing gum boots on relief. The line here was in a state of transition, as it had been necessary, on account of the wet weather, to fill in the bottom of the trenches and raise the parapet.

The filling in had been done in the worst places, but the parapet was everywhere very low, in some places it was not more than 3 feet high, and in others it was a little higher. It was, moreover, very thin at the top, being only one sandbag thick, and therefore quite useless as protection against the enemy's fire. In the places where the filling in had not been done two or three feet of water lay in the trench, which, as the temperature was below freezing point, had a thin layer of ice on the top, making it difficult and unpleasant to wade through. There were no dug-outs. All had collapsed.

The routine in the line was to work through the night with all available men in improving the line, and to devote the day, during which movement was impossible, to rest. No great offensive activity was shown on either side, the few casualties which occurred being due chiefly to men exposing themselves indiscreetly above the low parapet in the daylight.

On the 24th November we were relieved by the 4th Lincolns (40th Division), and after spending one night in our old billets at LOCON we marched to ROBECQ, near ST. VENANT, where it was intended to give the Division a month's rest. This, for some reason, did not materialise, for on the 4th December we found ourselves marching in the direction of the trenches again. On our arrival at CROIX MARMEUSE it was found that our proposed billets were still occupied by a Battalion of the 56th Brigade, who were not moving till the following day. We had evidently arrived a day too soon—and such a day! Rain fell in torrents incessantly, and most of the roads were under water. It was a common sight to see lorries and horse-drawn vehicles, the unhappy drivers of which had misjudged the breadth of the road, upturned in the ditches on either side. However, billets of a sort were found for the night in the neighbourhood, and a move made into the proper billets the following day when they were vacated. Whilst in Divisional Reserve for the following six days the Battalion was inspected by Brig.-General Twyford.

On the 11th December the Brigade took over the line at RICHEBOURG L'AVOUÉ. We, as in Brigade Reserve, moved into billets in the King's Road, LE TOURET, and the road leading from King's Road to LACOUTURE (Map A.). Four days were spent in finding working parties, and on the 15th we relieved the 8th Gloucesters in the line immediately south of the Boar's Head (Map C.). We were in turn relieved by them on the 19th, and again relieved them on the 23rd December. In this sector the 14th and 15th Welsh Regiments of the 38th Division were attached to us for instruction in trench warfare.

In this locality there was no longer a continuous trench line. Water had completely flooded the whole countryside, and the old trenches were quite untenable. All that it had been possible to construct was a series of small islands at places in the old parapet, and a breastwork of some ten feet in length. Behind this was often improvised a shelter of a few sheets of corrugated iron resting on a wall of sandbags. The islands were from 30 to 50 yards apart, and each was garrisoned by eight or nine men under a N.C.O.

By day communication between posts, or to the rear, was impossible. At night it was possible to walk along the old parapet from island to island. A pathway of trench boards laid over the open, and raised just above the vast shallow lakes, which lay everywhere, gave access to the rear. These island posts formed conspicuous targets, and were frequently pounded by the enemy's field guns. 2nd Lieut. Hoskins of D. Company, wounded in the head, was one of the number of casualties inflicted in this way.

Two Companies held the island posts, whilst the other two Companies were accommodated in ruined farms near the RUE DU BOIS. Inter-Company reliefs took place every 48 hours. This was a measure rendered necessary by the conditions of life in the front line. The rain was incessant, and everyone was periodically wet to the skin. Sleep was forbidden by night and impossible by day, owing to the inadequacy of leaky and overcrowded shelters, the artillery fire, frequent turns of sentry duty, and the incessant labour of keeping arms in a serviceable condition, and of preparing meals with little or no fuel, and that little saturated with water.

Christmas under these conditions was a singular experience. On the 23rd A. and B. Companies took over the line in a downpour which lasted all night. The next day, however, was fine, and Christmas Eve was a frosty, starlight night. Strictest orders had been issued forbidding any display of friendliness towards the enemy. About midnight our guns opened fire on his trenches, where for an hour or so he had been amusing himself singing hymns. Salvoes were repeated at frequent intervals through the night, and this was sufficient to eliminate any desire the Germans may have felt to fraternise after the manner of the previous Christmas.

Mutual bombardment continued throughout Christmas Day. At night C. and D. Companies relieved A. and B. The struggle through the mud (in places more than knee-deep) on the parapets made the relief a long and trying process. The journey was further enlivened for the men of the outgoing Companies, as they were making their way gingerly along the pathway of trench boards, by the action of a motor machine gun stationed near the place where the pathway debouched on to the road, and another machine gun in the German lines. The proprietors of these two guns amused themselves by rapping out tunes on their weapons. At another time this might have given amusement; on this occasion the performance was the less appreciated as the bullets from the German competitor were falling all around us.

Whilst this relief was in progress several men of D. Company were wounded in the RUE DU BOIS by shell fire.

On the 27th we were relieved by the 56th Brigade, and we parted from our understudies, the 14th Welsh Regiment, and marched to billets at LE TOURET, where a week of rest was spent.

On Friday, the 31st December, Major-General T. Bridges, who had recently taken over command of the Division, inspected the Battalion by the

roadside, and afterwards said that of the six Battalions of his command he had already inspected ours was by far the smartest. The compliment was much appreciated, and it was in a pleasant frame of mind that all began to prepare for the celebration, on New Year's Day, of a rather belated Christmas dinner.

Under the management of Major Wedgwood a generous dinner was provided for the men, and in the evening Companies held impromptu concerts in their billets. Thanks largely to friends at home for generous contributions to the Comforts' Fund of the Battalion, ably administered by Mrs. Wedgwood and Mrs. Locker, all were able to enter on the year 1916 under congenial conditions.

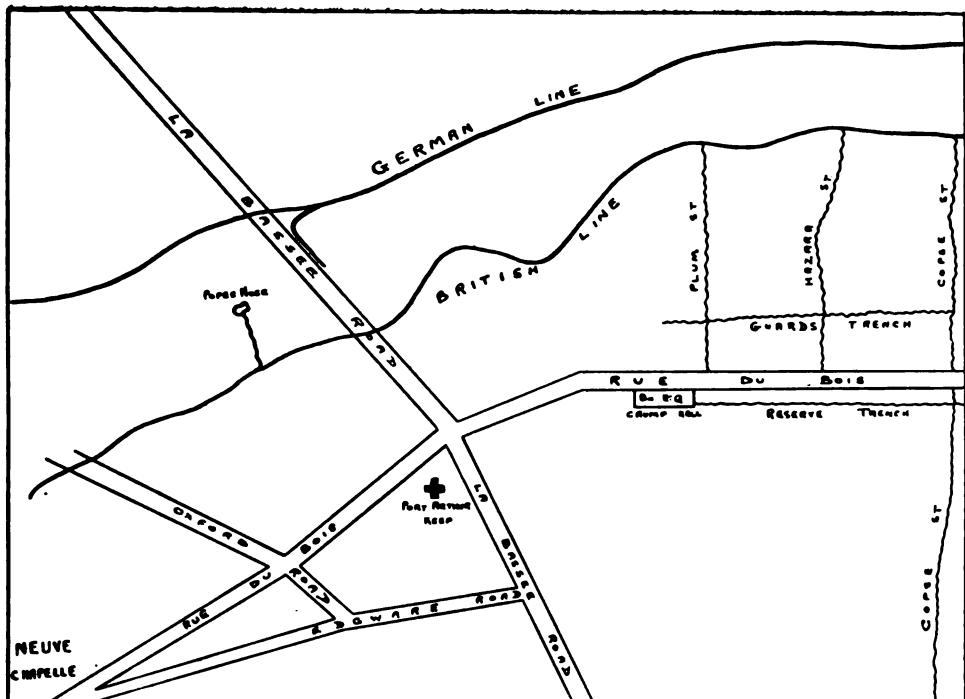
Four days later (4th of January) the Brigade went into the line again, and the Battalion, in Brigade Reserve, was for five days billeted at CROIX BARBÉE. It was employed, as usual when in reserve, working at various points in and behind the front line. On one occasion the whole of the Battalion was employed in removing gas cylinders from the front line. This had to be done across the open—a hazardous proceeding, fortunately unattended by casualties. The enemy were in trenches but eighty yards distant and continuously sent up lights.

On the 9th of January the Battalion took over the line (Map D.) from the 8th Gloucesters. A. and B. Companies occupied the sectors south and north of the LA BASSEE road respectively. The Battalion Headquarters were situated in some ruined farm buildings on the RUE DU BOIS, which went by the ominous name of "Crump Hall." Two tours of duty, each of five days, separated by an interval of five days in Brigade Reserve at CROIX BARBÉE, were done in these trenches. They were marked by frosty weather, an abundance of work, and a very noticeable increase in the Artillery activity on both sides.

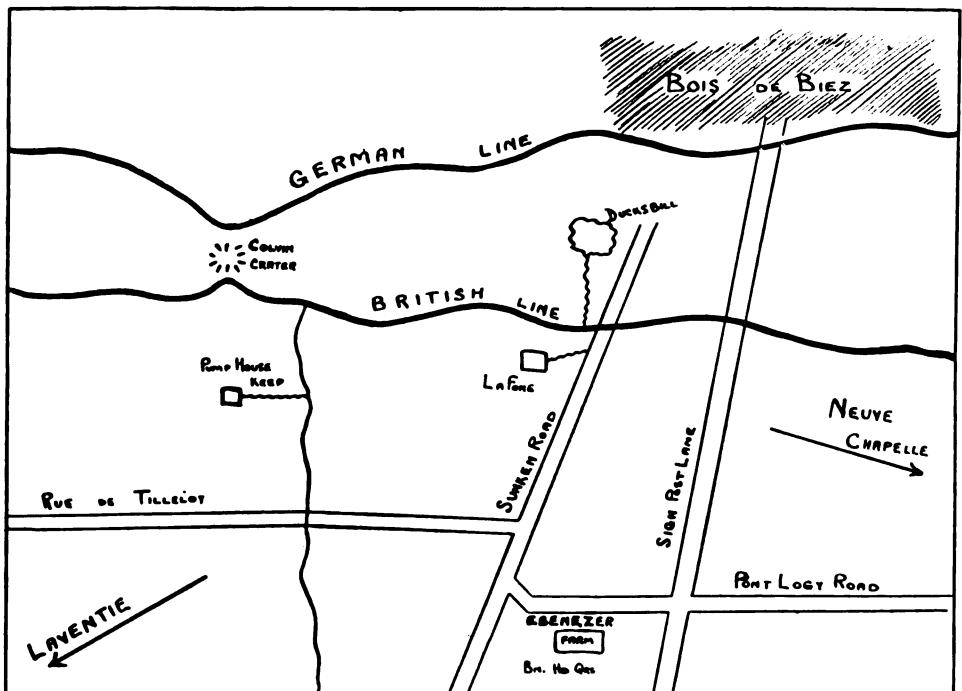
The trenches in this sector were much drier, the ground being a little higher and having sufficient fall to allow of some drainage. This was something for which to be thankful after previous experiences. There was, however, plenty of room for improvement, which was by no means unusual, and much work was done in raising parapets, laying trench boards, making dug-outs, etc. Practically all this work was done at night, when cold made sleep an impossibility.

Considerable losses were suffered in this sector, the chief sufferers being usually the Companies in reserve trenches. The enemy shell fire was directed on rear lines in preference to the front line. Much of it was wasted on the old support and reserve lines, but the "Orchard Trench" and "Crump Hall" were the constant target of his 5·9's.

Lieut. Lucas was mortally wounded in one of these bombardments, and on another occasion several N.C.O.'s, amongst them C.Q.M.S. Try, and men of C. Company, were killed by the explosion in a dug-out of a large shell.



POPE'S NOSE SECTOR.



DUCK'S BILL SECTOR.

C.S.M. Clarke was also wounded. Another serious loss to the Battalion was C.S.M. Mellon, who was wounded whilst working on the parapet. There were many narrow escapes, such as the occasion on which a shell entered the partially ruined barn in which 30 men, the battalion bombers, were sleeping, and passed through the opposite wall before it exploded. During January a number of men were invalided home through sickness brought on by the hardships of the wintry conditions.

During one of these tours a small entertainment was staged, which took the form of a sham attack. A party of the 58th Brigade raided the enemy's line. The raid was followed at dawn by an artillery and smoke bomb bombardment, after which dummy figures were raised above the parapet to the accompaniment of cheering, much blowing of whistles, more smoke, and rapid fire. The effect was to raise the wind with Fritz, who showed his discomfort by a rapid, if somewhat badly aimed, rifle and machine gun fire and much harmless artillery fire.

A noteworthy event about this time was the first issue of steel helmets. Early impressions of them were unfavourable. They were found heavy and uncomfortable, which was not unnatural, as they were all of the same size. Custom soon made their use less irksome, and experience proved their worth.

On the night of the 24th January the sector was handed over to the Welsh Troops of the 38th Division, and after one night at CROIX BARBÉE we marched to ROBECQ and occupied the same billets as during our interrupted rest in November. On this occasion we were more fortunate, for we spent a very pleasant month in our comfortable billets before being called upon to hold the line again. The weather was spring-like, and the time was spent in working off the effects of the prolonged spell in the trenches, and in general cleaning and smartening up under the watchful eyes of the Brigade and Divisional Commanders.

Three welcome additions to the Battalion were made at ROBECQ on the arrival from England of Captains Purves and Denton and Lieut. Woolliscroft.

Full advantage was taken of the opportunity which occurred for football, and many inter-company and inter-battalion games were played. On the 29th a very successful sports' meeting, organized by Major Wedgwood, was held.

Our period of rest, like most good things, terminated all too soon, and February 17th found us marching again towards the line. The Division had taken over the line, which was held by the 56th and 58th Brigades, while the 57th Brigade was in Divisional Reserve. We went into billets at MERVILLE, where a week was spent, during which the most interesting event was the re-opening of leave after a suspension of about one month. On the 24th instant the 57th Brigade took over the line with the Gloucesters and Worcesters, whilst the Warwicks and ourselves were in support. We were billeted at RIEZ-BAILLEUL, a small hamlet about two or three miles behind the line (Map E.), with two Platoons at ROUGE CROIX, where the RUE DU BACQUEROT

and LA BASSÉE roads intersect. This point was familiarly known as "Crucifix Corner," on account of the Crucifix which stood there, untouched by shells, a prominent and striking landmark amid the ruined houses.

On the night of the 26th we relieved the Gloucesters in the line from "Signpost Lane" to the "Birdcage" (Map E.). The line ran about 400 yards east of the village of NEUVE CHAPELLE and had figured prominently on many occasions during the War, as part of the scene both of the battle of NEUVE CHAPELLE and of later abortive attacks in the early summer of 1915. The German line ran just west of the BOIS DE BIEZ, and a little further north along the foot of the AUBERS RIDGE, a position which afforded them great advantages in the matter of observation. To the rear of our lines the ground was of a flatness typical of Flanders. The landmarks in the immediate vicinity were the RUE DE TILLELOY, the PONT LOGY road, and the RUE DE BACQUEROT, all of which run parallel to the trenches and joined the LA BASSÉE—ESTAIRES road, the ruins of NEUVE CHAPELLE, PONT LOGY, and ROUGE CROIX, and several dilapidated farms. In the distance, to the north-west, could be seen the spire of LAVENTIE church.

The trenches were in good condition, having been substantially built. They were fairly dry and laid with trench boards. There were a good number of dug-outs but not sufficient for requirements. Battalion Headquarters were situated in dug-outs built round some ruined farm buildings on the PONT LOGY road, popularly known as "Ebenezer Farm."

A feature of the sector was an extraordinary salient known as the "Duck's Bill," the configuration of which is best realised from Map E. Mining operations on both sides were in progress at two points of this sector, one a little to the north of "South Tilleloy Street" and the firing line, and the other at the "Duck's Bill." The latter was reported to be undermined by the enemy, and was held by a party of Bombers, whose feelings, on the prospect of finding themselves flying skywards at any moment, may be better imagined than described.

During this tour we had the support of a Company of the newly formed M.G.C., recently out from England. A Company of Durham Light Infantry of the 35th (Bantam) Division was attached to the Battalion for instruction in trench work. Each Company distributed one Platoon among its men.

After two days we were relieved by the Gloucesters, and we marched to RIEZ BAILLEUL, where the next four days were spent in rest and working parties.

On the night of the 3rd March we again relieved the Gloucesters. The night was marked by a striking change in the weather, the summer-like conditions of the last few days giving place to snow, which continued during the whole of this tour. Another Company of the Durham Light Infantry was attached for instruction during this tour.

These tours were on the whole uneventful. There was much artillery activity on both sides, and many casualties were caused by enemy H.E. shells. However, the weight of metal in our favour now began to be very noticeable, a fact which was a source of some consolation.

Among the casualties were Lieut. Lamplugh (wounded) and Lieut. Woolliscroft, both of whom were invalided home.

On the night of the 7th March the line was handed over to our "under-studies," the 36th Division. The Battalion, on relief by a Battalion of the H.L.I., marched through the snow to LA GORGUE, arriving, after a particularly trying march, in the early morning. Eight days were spent in billets at LA GORGUE; but during the whole of the time large working parties had to be sent to the line, where great efforts were being made to recover the support and reserve lines.

2nd Lieut. Line was killed, and several men were killed or wounded whilst engaged in this work.

Rumours now arose of plans for an extensive raid by the 57th Brigade on the enemy's line, and patrols were sent to examine the ground in No Man's Land at the point where it was anticipated that the Battalion would take part. Before the Brigade moved up again definite orders were received for the enterprise, and when, on the 14th March, the line was again taken over by the Division, the Battalion moved forward to RIEZ BAILLEUL and began whole-heartedly to prepare and practice for it. A large amount of preliminary work on the trenches was involved, and for their particular efforts the Battalion received the special thanks of the C.R.E., 19th Division.

The preparations for the raid were practically completed, when the situation at other points of the front changed, and necessitated the curtailment of the operations, which were finally limited to the employment of two Companies only. The choice fell on us, but arrangements were further changed time after time until, eventually, the raiding party was fixed as a complement of 92 men of D. Company and the Battalion Bombers. The honour of commanding the party fell to Captain Purves by the spin of the coin. The raid took place on the night of the 20th March, on a section of the German line opposite the "Bird Cage" (near Winchester Road). It was immediately preceded by the explosion of five of our mines. It was quite successful and accounted for some twenty of the enemy. Congratulations were received from the Brigade Commander Brig.-General L. T. C. Twyford, also by a special Order of the Day by Divisional Commander Major-General T. Bridges, and a congratulatory telegram from the Army Commander General Monro.

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY, BY MAJOR-GENERAL
23/3/1916. T. BRIDGES, C.M.G., D.S.O.

"The G.O.C. desires to congratulate the Officers and men of the 8th North Stafford Regiment for the daring enterprise which was carried out by

them on short notice and under such difficult circumstances on the night of 20/21 March. This offensive action had the desired effect of upsetting the enemy's nerve, and caused him to prematurely spring a mine and waste countless rounds of ammunition.

"It must always be borne in mind that every offensive action, however small, that is carried out with determination, has an effect on the enemy's morale quite out of proportion to any casualties we may inflict or suffer, and has a direct influence on the comparative values of the opposing forces by raising our own morale and correspondingly lowering that of the enemy.

"Signed P. M. DAVIES, A.A. and Q.M.G., 19th Division."

Copy of 11th Corps Wire, Dated 21/3/16.

FROM ARMY COMMANDER MUNRO.

"Am delighted to hear of your successful raid last night. Please congratulate all concerned from me. This is just what we want."

Messages from highly-placed Commanders such as these were highly inspiring to all ranks. The Battalion had become a very fine fighting unit, and the reputation it had already acquired gave it the confidence of being prepared—whatever the future should bring—to acquit itself creditably.

The Battalion was not allowed to remain inactive, and on the night following the raid again took over the line from the Gloucesters, not without promise of some excitement. While the 35th Division had been holding the line the mine under the "Duck's Bill" had been sprung, completely destroying it and killing 70 or 80 men of the H.L.I., who formed the garrison at the time. The sappers further reported that our left was undermined and would probably share the fate of the "Duck's Bill" in a few hours. The likelihood was regarded as so great that about 100 yards of the line held by A. Company was completely cleared of men. On the 22nd our heavy artillery made an attempt to destroy the German sap-head, which was supposed to be tunnelled beneath our wire entanglements. The bombardment failed in its purpose and necessitated much work in repair of trenches, etc., blown in by shells falling short. All through the night the repair work was carried on, and by morning most of it had been done. As day was breaking a large number of Germans, thought to be a working party, were observed leaving their front line opposite the left of A. Company's position. "Stand to" passed off quietly, but a few minutes after "Stand down" the enemy fired his mine simultaneously with the bursting of shrapnel overhead.

The troops again stood to arms, and opened fire on the German parapet, but ceased as soon as it became obvious that the enemy had no intention of following up the explosion by infantry action. The crater lay in front of our line with its lip touching the parapet at the point where the old Colvin communication trench joined the front line. It became known as the "Colvin

Crater" (Map E.). The casualties inflicted by the explosion were heavy. Several men of A. Company were killed and wounded by the displacement of the parapet, and many were crushed by the collapse of the trench walls, which met together in the violent upheaval of the explosion. The greater number of casualties, however, were not due to the destruction of the trench itself, but to the fact that just to the right of this mine was an old crater. The new crater burst through the old one, which formed a huge *fougasse* which hurled huge masses of clay, each weighing several tons, into the air. These crashed through the strongest dug-outs as though they were made of paper. 2nd Lieut. West and his servant were thrown through the door of a dug-out with such violence that the latter was killed and the former fractured his skull in falling. In a few hours the ordinary routine of trench life was resumed and the repair of the damage began.

The miners, after investigation below ground, reported that the enemy were still sapping close to A. Company's position, and estimated that another mine would be fired within 48 hours. The situation was therefore one of great anxiety. It remained so until the night of the 24/25th March, when the sappers fired two small charges, which succeeded in destroying the German sap-head. After this there was a temporary respite from mining activity.

The night of the 23rd was marked by continuous machine gun fire directed by the enemy on the new crater. It was impracticable to occupy it, but it was reconnoitred, after two abortive attempts, by a patrol led by Sergeant Burnyeat and Lance-Corporal Dutton; the former was slightly wounded during the first attempt by a machine gun bullet. The "Duck's Bill" was visited by an enemy patrol, which met with a warm reception from our men and was forced to retire, leaving one dead Unter-Offizier on the ground. The body was carried into our lines and buried.

On the night of the 25th the Gloucesters once more took over and the Battalion moved back to billets at RIEZ BAILLEUL. After so strenuous a tour in the line, one which had cost 100 men in casualties in the space of a week, the rest was very welcome.

The next three days were spent in billets. Several officers, including Major Wedgwood and the Adjutant, went on leave to England, whilst Lt.-Colonel Locker temporarily commanded the Brigade in the absence of the G.O.C. Major Carnegy was therefore left to command the Battalion. Another change in personnel occurred on the departure of Captain Bennett, the M.O., to take over duties at a clearing station. His successor was Captain D. W. John, R.A.M.C.

On the night of the 28th we took over the line once more from the Gloucesters. The "Duck's Bill" was held, as before, by the bombers and men of the right Company. Lieut. Cryan (Bombing Officer), Lieut. Saunders and a Company Officer shared the duty of remaining with the posts during the night. From this time onwards only the near lip of the crater was occupied,

as it was thought that the enemy would blow up the lip nearest his line to enable him to see into the crater. The three days spent in the trenches were, on the whole, uneventful, except for Battalion Headquarters, which came in for the unwelcome attention of the enemy's heavy howitzers. The Headquarters were, as usual, occupying "Ebenezer Farm" (Map E.), when on the afternoon of the 30th March the enemy 9·2 howitzers suddenly opened fire on the building. The first shot struck the PONT LOGY road 40 yards to the north of the objective. The second fell in the middle of the farmyard, and having found the target the enemy continued shelling it for over two hours. From the front line the shells could actually be seen falling just before striking the ground, and even at such a distance the concussion was quite violent. The shooting was wonderfully accurate. Great damage was done to the farm buildings, several dug-outs were destroyed, including the C.O.'s, and there were many casualties. R.S.M. Wilson distinguished himself by the way in which he tended the wounded, for during the whole time the shelling was in progress he remained in the open with them, showing absolute disregard of the danger of his position.

On the 30th our line was taken over by the 6th Cheshire Regiment and we marched to LA GORGUE, where an uneventful week was spent. This was followed by three days at RIEZ BAILLEUL, and three more in the line. This proved to be our last tour of trench warfare for some months. On the 13th April the whole of the Division moved back to the 1st Army training area near AIRE.

This closed the chapter of the experiences of the Battalion in the long winter of trench warfare. There had been little actual fighting done, but every tour in the line had been a trial of endurance under the lash of cold, rain and snow, from which there was little or no shelter. By night the only relief for the sentry at the end of his vigil was work, which, though it restored warmth, was a real strain on a weary and exhausted man. By day there was more work to be done—work which could only be done in daylight. Arms had to be kept clean, feet carefully tended to avoid frost-bite and trench foot, and food cooked. The handicap of mud, water and rain required for these duties very much more time than otherwise, and when by careful organization a few hours could be allotted to sleep, it was often made impossible by some action on the part of the enemy.

In billets, also, there was often much hardship, the Infantry being constantly on the move, and the best billets were frequently appropriated by troops of other arms or services. When the men arrived from the trenches, wet through and plastered with mud, they were rarely able to dry their clothes, and, if they contrived to do so, were almost invariably sent out on working parties the next day, from which they returned in as bad a state as before.

This constant and excessive exposure inevitably resulted in much sickness, through which the Battalion lost many men. Those who remained were,

nevertheless, quite unaffected in spirit by the conditions under which they lived; in fact at the end of the winter the morale of the Battalion was better than it had ever been before.

For those who lived constantly among them the cheerfulness of the men was a commonplace that passed almost unnoticed; it was, nevertheless, in reality a very wonderful thing. They were possessed of all the characteristic British aptitude for "grousing" over trivialities, and yet, whenever things became really bad their spirits would rise, and they would see something intensely humorous in their own and their comrades' discomforts. Almost every Platoon seemed to possess a recognised "funny man," who could be relied upon to burst forth at the right moment into a flood of humour, sometimes original and sometimes well worn, but all the more popular for the aptitude of its application to the situations which were daily encountered. In trenches almost waist deep in water or mud, wet to the skin, cold and tired, almost within a stone's throw of a powerful, ingenious, and unscrupulous enemy, without fire or shelter, and with the prospect of this kind of life for an indefinite period, they would be found laughing, joking and singing, quite oblivious of it all.

Further tributes to the men's cheerfulness under adverse circumstances are best told in the words of Major Cecil Wedgwood, D.S.O., in extracts from his letters to Mrs. Wedgwood.

October 29th, 1915.—"Well, I boasted too soon last night. My dug-out was quite dry when I went to bed, but I woke up at midnight to find a cheerful drip on the bed.

"Everything is in an awful state, the trenches melting away, so to speak, with the rain, and only kept going by constant work. The trenches up and down are like glue, and I was really tired out when I got back at one o'clock after being up in the firing line all morning. The men are wonderful, despite the fact that every dug-out is leaking like a sieve, and they are never dry."

October 30th.—"To-day has been fine and to-night looks like frost. Our trenches are drying up, and life is more cheerful, not that the men are ever down in spirits."

November 2nd.—Last night, when we left the trenches, the water was coming into all the dug-outs, and was standing several inches everywhere. The whole place is a swamp in winter. We had an awful time getting out. The trenches, parapets, and dug-outs were collapsing everywhere with the rain. Men were buried by the trench sides falling in on them, and had to be dug out. It took one Platoon from 3-30 to 6-30 p.m. to get from the firing line to the end of the communication trench, not above one third of a mile. To add to the difficulty it was a pitch-dark night and windy. The men were all soaked when they got here, and the billets are bad, so they had a very cold, uncomfortable night. Even to-day they have great difficulty in getting anyway dry with braziers and fires, for the rain is incessant. We had hot tea

ready for them on their arrival, and in spite of it all they are perfectly good, though the Officers say there was a pillar of blue profanity accompanying each Platoon as they came along last night. Fortunately it was not more than four miles—but SUCH a four miles!"

December 22nd.—“The men are splendid. They live in perpetual discomfort, and a considerable share of danger, as our casualties show; but they never grumble, and are cheerful and patient.”

CHAPTER III.

SOMME.

THE journey back from the line was accomplished in easy stages. Halts were made at MERVILLE, where a good portion of our surplus kit was dumped—an effort toward increased mobility—and at ROBECQ, where for a few days the old billets were occupied. On Thursday, the 20th April, MAMETZ, a village some three miles west of AIRE was reached. This village stood on the edge of the 1st Army training area, which lay round THEROUANNE. Here the Battalion was billeted and remained for 17 days.

The surrounding country was gently broken. Low ridges cut across it in all directions, dotted with small woods and villages at frequent intervals. Its general appearance was much more English than the flat country just left behind, and the change was pleasant and welcome. MAMETZ was situated on the crest of one of these ridges, on the main Aire-Therouanne road. To the west the ground fell gently to the village of MARTHES, where the Worcesters were billeted.

After a few days' rain the weather became gloriously fine, and the country looked more attractive than we had seen it since our arrival in France. The heat during the days spent on the training ground was almost stifling; but the days were nevertheless enjoyable, and the five-mile march morning and evening was made enjoyable by the lusty singing *en route*. Bathing was allowed in the stream which ran by the village, and every evening numbers of men availed themselves of the opportunity for a swim, which the hot weather made attractive. Evening at this time, with the day's work done, the air grown cool and fresh, the distant croaking of the frogs in the pond half a mile away near MARTHES, and on all the mellow light of declining day, was inexpressibly charming. The advent of spring, after the long, dreary, winter vigil, amid such environments, was more beautiful than one had ever known it. The War for the moment was almost forgotten.

The time was spent in training, and was reminiscent of the TIDWORTH days. The 19th Division had evidently been allotted its task in the great offensive, to which everyone was now looking forward, and day after day was devoted to attacks on "defended villages," the *rôle* which it was anticipated would be allotted to us after the first defences of the enemy had been carried. The usual objective in these attacks was ENGUINEGUETTE, the scene of a great mediæval battle. It was a small hamlet standing on an eminence on the western edge of the training ground. The tall church spire stood up prominently above the surrounding orchards and newly-ploughed ground.

During our short stay we rushed through Company, Battalion, Brigade and Divisional Training, closely supervised throughout by General Bridges.

General Munro, commanding the 1st Army, also visited the training ground and watched the Battalion on the Engineette-Marthes road as they marched home in the evening at the end of a day's work.

Several new Officers arrived at MAMETZ, including Lieut. Colls and 2nd Lieuts. Fletcher, Hunter, and Franklyn. The Divisional band and concert party paid visits to the village, and a concert was also organised in the Battalion, the most notable item of which was a song by Captain John, entitled "I'm Henry the VIIIth, I am," sung with inimitable expression.

At the end of our training here, on May the 6th, we entrained at AIRE, and after a twelve hours' journey arrived at AMIENS at one o'clock in the morning of the 7th. The journey was not without incident, for shortly after leaving DOULLENS a coupling broke, and the engine, with the forepart of the train comprising the Battalion Transport, went on. The rear portion of the train immediately started to run back down the decline, and it was only by the prompt action of some of the men in applying the hand brakes, that what might have resulted in a very serious accident was averted. It was not until about an hour and a half had elapsed that the runaway portion of the train came back and our interrupted journey was continued.

As soon as the detrainment was completed the Battalion marched out of AMIENS to VIGNECOURT, a village 16 miles to the north. It was a dreary and apparently endless march in the early morning after the long, uncomfortable train journey. The splendid reputation of the Battalion was further enhanced by the manner in which it was completed.

Here the Brigade was billeted with the remainder of the Division in adjacent villages. We had now left the 1st Army and had joined the 10th Corps of the 4th Army, the Commanders of which were respectively General Pulteney and General Sir Henry Rawlinson. We remained in VIGNECOURT for three weeks, training being continued all the time, though lack of available ground made extended field operations an impossibility.

The country in which we now found ourselves differed much from the flat, waterlogged, stagnant district of Northern France. The breezy hills, the first green of spring in the woods and fields, and the fine weather, were very invigorating, and the time spent here formed a pleasant continuation to the days at MAMETZ. Life was considerably enlivened by the presence of an extremely clever concert party—"The Tykes"—attached to the 49th Division, a Brigade of which was also billeted in the village.

Lieuts. Lowry and Tulloch left the Battalion here to join the Brigade Trench Mortar Battery, and Lieut. Cryan became Brigade Bombing Officer, his former position as Battalion Bombing Officer being filled by Lieut. Fletcher.

On May 29th the Brigade marched to ST. RICQUIER to the 4th Army training area. This was a very severe test of marching, through which the Battalion came with great credit. Not a single man fell out—an excellent example of march discipline.

Here again the operation of attacking a village was practised day after day, until each man became thoroughly familiar with every phase of the manœuvre. On returning to billets through ST. RICQUIER, at the close of one of these days, the Battalion marched past the Army Commander, Sir Henry Rawlinson, who afterwards expressed to Colonel Locker his great appreciation of the men's appearance. On another occasion, towards the end of the training, the Corps Commander, General Pulteney, witnessed the day's operations. It was while we were here that Sir Douglas Haig's first despatch was published, in which the Battalion was one of the three of the Division which received special mention for the work they had done. Colonel Locker was also mentioned in despatches. His excellent services with the Battalion merited this at the least.*

About this time a large number of Officers arrived from England in anticipation of the "Push," and we received a reminder that it would not be much longer delayed in an address from General Bridges, Divisional Commander, who gave an outline of the expected task of the Division, and expressed his confidence in the ability and determination of everyone to carry it through.

On June the 8th we marched back to VIGNECOURT, where Colonel Locker was taken seriously ill and was evacuated to Hospital. There were very few amongst us who thought that this would be the last we should see during the War of our popular Commanding Officer, though this great set-back was scarcely realised at the time owing to the command being taken over by Major Wedgwood, D.S.O. There was the comforting thought at this time that our Colonel would soon be with us again. His illness was much more serious than had been anticipated. For over a year he was confined to bed, undergoing repeated operations, and even after convalescence he never recovered sufficiently to pass the medical test for active service.

On the 12th June, under command of Major Wedgwood, we left VIGNECOURT with much regret, having had a pleasant time during our stay there. We marched in the direction of the line, halting for one night at MOLLIENS-AU-BOIS, and on the 13th reached DERNANCOURT, which was found considerably overcrowded. Billets were not available and the Battalion was allotted a hollow near the railway line between DERNANCOURT and ALBERT. With the aid of tents and bivouacs we proceeded to make ourselves as comfortable as the circumstances would allow. A mile and a half away could be seen the shattered church of ALBERT and the now historical feature of the statue of

* Colonel Locker served with the 1st Battalion, North Stafford Regiment, for fifteen years seven of which were spent in India, and he was Adjutant of the 4th Battalion for five years. He retired in July, 1912, but became Second in Command of the 4th Battalion in October of the same year.

His Staffordshire home was Pirehill, near Stone. His father's house was Tillington Hall Stafford, and his father served in the 3rd Battalion for a short time.

Colonel Locker was mentioned in Despatches in June, 1916, just before his serious illness.

the Madonna hanging over in a horizontal position. Still further could be seen, on the high ground, the chalky outline of the trenches. Ten days were spent in continuous work on the trenches, during which a number of casualties occurred.

Major Wedgwood, with Officers commanding Companies, paid short visits to the trenches between Authuile Wood and Albert-Becourt Road, then held by the 8th and 34th Divisions, and reconnoitred the roads and tracks leading up to them from ALBERT. The numbers of men and guns which one saw here on every hand made one feel very optimistic. Perhaps the most notable impression was that of the great difference that was apparent, both in actual fighting strength, and in the care and forethought of preliminaries, between this and the Loos offensive.

Every available man seemed to be employed in preparation to ensure success. All roads and tracks led to the line, and along these an almost uninterrupted stream of vehicles of all kinds journeyed with their loads, comprising every conceivable article of war material. Through the trenches, carrying parties passed continuously day after day, with their loads of bombs, ammunition for machine guns, mortars and rifles, tools, and R.E. stores of every description. Above, aeroplanes worked so assiduously, that the German machines practically never dared to approach our lines.

Further orders for the offensive were being constantly received, together with reports of an encouraging nature as to the degree of resistance which our Higher Command anticipated.

On the 23rd June there was a very bad storm, during which one of our sausage balloons broke loose and was driven swiftly by the high wind in the direction of the line. It was, after much excitement, brought down by our A.A. guns. Fortunately its passengers had been evacuated before its escape. During this night the Battalion marched "cross country" to BRESLE, where a week was spent in final preparation for the great offensive. Special articles of equipment, such as wire cutters, etc., were served out, and experiments were made with the method of disposing the men's fighting kit until a solution compatible with a reasonable degree of comfort was discovered. This was no mean achievement in view of the fact that each fighting man was carrying 69 lbs. weight of clothing, ammunition, rations, etc. Such a number of additional articles had been issued that the prevailing joke compared the soldier to a Christmas Tree, as "something to hang things on."

On the morning of the 24th June our bombardment opened. This was "U" day, and the attack was to be launched on "Z" day (the 29th June), but was postponed for two days and was not launched until the 1st July. During each of these days preceding the attack a continuous bombardment was kept up with guns of all sizes. Each evening crowds of troops collected on the high ground between HENENCOURT, BRESLE, and MILLENCOURT to watch the spectacle. The big shells could be seen bursting everywhere, almost

hiding the countryside in smoke, and throughout the night the sky was lit by the yellow and electric-blue flashes of the explosions. Strange to say, only a very subdued noise reached us, and the reports that the bombardment could be heard in England were generally received with ridicule. The air during this period was dotted with our observation balloons, no fewer than 23 being visible on one occasion.

A brief outline of the plan of attack, as far as we were concerned, was as follows:—

The 3rd Corps were to take the Pozieres line as the first objective, the 34th Division on the right, the 8th Division on the left, the 19th Division in Reserve, and the 57th Brigade in Reserve to the Division. Three alternative plans were prepared for the 57th Brigade to execute.

1. To move into line on the left of the 56th Brigade at Orvillers Post.

2. To replace the 58th Brigade in the Tara-Usna line.

3. To replace the 56th Brigade in the vicinity of the Usna Redoubt.

(All were places of importance in the trench system near ALBERT.)

Elaborate arrangements had been made to meet any of these eventualities. All possible routes were mapped out, and no details of equipment and rations were omitted. All troops should have been in the places allotted to them on "Y" day (28th June). The position allotted to this Battalion was "Tyler's" Redoubt—an earthwork west of ALBERT—ready to follow out any one of the above moves, but, as has been already pointed out, the operations were postponed for two days. These the Battalion spent at BRESLE.

At this time the morale and physical condition of the Battalion was excellent, everyone was literally straining at the leash. The trench mud and methods of Flanders had been brushed away by a thorough training for the attack in the open, all formations, from the Platoon to the Division, being thoroughly conversant with this method of warfare. Up till now the Battalion had not been called upon to take part in any direct and general attack, and now it was to have an opportunity—and with what high hopes did we anticipate the great battle which was so soon to begin! There were not many amongst us who thought of reverses or difficulties, the general impression being that after the 1st July all that remained to do would be a few forced marches to the Rhine.

On the 30th June the Battalion made its final preparations for the offensive, which included amongst other things the storing of men's packs, surplus kit, etc. The Battalion left BRESLE at 8 p.m. and marched to "Tyler's" Redoubt, where it bivouaced for the night. Only those Officers detailed to take part in the attack accompanied the Battalion. The remainder were sent with the Battalion Transport Dépôt to form a first reinforcement.

At 2 a.m. on the 1st July the work of serving out rations, bombs, additional ammunition, tools, flares, trench bridges, and other impedimenta, was begun

and completed before daybreak. At daybreak the men took cover in the trenches of the redoubt to avoid the enemy's observation, as the position was in full view of the enemy by day.

At 7-30 a.m. the attack was launched, and the Battalion left "Tyler's" Redoubt and moved by Companies to an intermediate line of trenches by the Albert-Bouzincourt road, N.-W. of ALBERT, arriving there about 9 a.m. It was with difficulty that the men were squeezed into this line, which did not afford much in the way of accommodation, and as they were heavily burdened, and the day had become very hot, the position was somewhat uncomfortable. The next move was about 4 p.m., when the Battalion marched through ALBERT, across the ANCRE, and via "Lloyd Avenue" communication trench to the Reserve Trench line, running through "Usna" and "Tara" Redoubts, and known as the Usna-Tara line. This line was already packed with men, and it was not till 7-30 p.m. that, after much difficulty and fatiguing inconvenience, the Battalion had settled into it.

This Reserve line was a deep trench with commodious dug-outs specially prepared for the offensive. It ran about 100 yards from the crest of the Ridge on the reverse slope from the enemy. It was possible to walk about in the open behind it out of sight of the enemy. The Albert-Bapaume road was also under cover and was used as a highway for traffic up to the point where it crossed the trench. The road marked the right of our position on the crest of the hill, about a kilometre from the enemy's front line.

On the following night (1st/2nd July) orders were received at 8 p.m. to attack LA BOISELLE at 10-30 p.m. the same night, in conjunction with the 10th Worcesters, who would operate on our left. The village had been attacked in the morning by the 34th Division, but they had failed to make any headway, and had suffered very severely.

Major Wedgwood summoned the Officers commanding Companies, and a short conference was held with the Officers of the Worcesters. The Bombers were detailed to lead the attack, followed successively by D. and C. Companies, with B. Company as a carrying party. In pursuance of instructions the move to the front line was made via the communication trench which led to Albert road. This trench was found to be much congested, and great confusion arose in the attempt to pass stretcher and other parties of the 34th Division. The Officers of the Battalion were unfamiliar with this trench system, which was very complex. As a result of this confusion it was finally found necessary to leave the trench and make the best way possible across the open. Even then day was breaking when the leading Companies reached the place of assembly—the front line—and only two Companies (C. and D.) succeeded in reaching it at all. Similar difficulty had been experienced by the Worcesters. The attack was therefore cancelled for the time. D. Company and the Bombers were moved back to the Tara-Usna line once more. C. Company was left to hold the front line under the orders of Lt.-Colonel Heath,

Commanding the 10th Warwicks, who were occupying the front line on the left of our position of assembly with Headquarters at "Keats' Redan."

The morning of the 2nd July passed quietly and men were able to get a little much-needed sleep, after which they turned to the work of burying the dead of the 34th Division, who lay in the trench in large numbers. The ground in front and rear of the trench was also littered with dead bodies and wounded; the enemy was busy sniping the latter whenever they showed signs of life.

About 2 p.m. on the 2nd July an attack was launched by the 56th Brigade (19th Division) from a trench about 400 yards on our right. Their objective was a German trench running south from the village of LA BOISELLE. It was possible to obtain a splendid view of the attack, which was carried out with wonderful vigour and precision, and was a magnificent and inspiring sight.

As this attack began the enemy, evidently fearing a simultaneous attack from our line, placed a heavy barrage of shrapnel on it, and we stood to arms under this fire for several hours. Fortunately the trench was a deep one, affording good protection, and as the enemy's guns were not enfilading the trench only a few minor casualties occurred. The 56th Brigade gained their objective, and in the evening the situation became calm again, except that about dusk the enemy shelled the left of our position for about an hour and a half.

As soon as night fell small parties of the 34th Division arrived and began to search between the lines for their wounded. Corporal Siddall and several men of C. Company, with praiseworthy promptitude, volunteered to assist them, and, being allowed to do so, did some very good work.

Early on the morning of the 3rd July the Battalion made its way to the front line, to assemble for the second attack on LA BOISELLE. The line was reached about 2 a.m. Major Wedgwood immediately issued final orders for the assault of the village, which was to be carried out at 3-15 a.m. In addition to the brief written orders short instructions were given for the assembly in our own line prior to the attack. The Battalion assembled in order from south to north, Bombers, D., C., B., A. Companies.

To allow the Bombers and D. Company to reach their position C. Company climbed over the parados into the inspection trench behind it. D. Company thereupon took up its position with two Platoons in the fire trench, and two Platoons lying behind the parados. B. Company took up position on the left of C. Company, and a portion of A. on the left of B. Company. Owing to some unexplained confusion on the way to the front line, a part of A. Company remained for some time in the communication trench and only arrived on the scene just as the attack opened.

Whilst these dispositions were being made our guns were dropping shells into the village in a continuous stream. The grandeur of the bombardment

was beyond description, but the overwhelming noise made it a matter of difficulty for the necessary orders to be heard. Almost as soon as the preparations were completed, and a few hurried words of explanation of the design and objective of the attack had been spoken to Platoon Commanders and Sergeants, the attack was commenced.

The Worcesters, as before, were on our left, the Warwicks and Gloucesters being in support, while simultaneously with our attack the 12th Division were to make an attempt to take OVILLERS. The ground over which the attack had to be made presented many difficulties. The village of LA BOISELLE formed an acute salient in the enemy's line. It stood on a small spur which ran out towards the British line so that the approach to it was uphill. From the German line, running north to OVILLERS, an enfilade fire could be brought to bear on "Mash Valley"—the dip in the ground between the British and German trenches.

The trench system in the village was so complicated that it was difficult even in daytime to identify points marked on the map, especially as many of the trenches had been wholly or partially destroyed by the successive bombardments and numerous mines which had been sprung round the apex of the salient. The largest of these mines had been fired on the 1st July, completely destroying what was known as the "V" sap, and forming an enormous white crater. Practically nothing remained of the houses in the village. The ground was so torn by shell fire that in the dark the remains of the trenches and the shell craters were almost indistinguishable. The defences had been heavily wired, and the remains of this wire lay everywhere.

When D. Company, the leading Company, reached the large crater, they threw a considerable number of bombs into it, under the impression that it was occupied by the enemy. This caused a check, and C. and B. Companies, which were following, came up, and were soon inextricably mixed up with D. Company. This resulted in loss of control and some hesitation on the part of the men, who were bewildered by the explosion of the bombs and their ignorance of the position they were attacking. At this point Major Carnegy rallied the attack, walking ahead of the men, waving his stick in the air and shouting, "Come on Staffords," and the advance was continued. As day broke the Worcesters were seen coming through the haze on our left. The advance was continued against great opposition through the village almost to its outer edge when, the system of carrying parties being at fault, the supply of bombs gave out.

The enemy chose this moment to deliver a counter-attack. Enemy agents, which were active, had passed an order to "Retire," and it was whilst rallying the men to resist the counter-attack that Major C. Wedgwood, D.S.O., was killed.

His keen and eager disposition, and high sense of duty, had taken him from Battalion Headquarters to the front line to personally supervise the

operations. When the unauthorised order to "Retire" reached him he leapt on the parapet of an old German trench, regardless of personal danger, shouting "FORWARD, NORTH STAFFORDS!" At that moment he was struck in the neck by a sniper's bullet and died almost immediately.

The counter-attack succeeded in forcing us back to a point about a quarter of the way through the village. The withdrawal was due more to the confusion that prevailed, and to the work of enemy agents, than to the pressure of the enemy's attacking troops. Up to this time about 150 of the enemy had surrendered.

At about 6 a.m., the O.C. B. Company, Major Carnegy, was killed by an enemy sniper. These were extraordinarily active and claimed many Officers at this point.

Many Officers had been killed and wounded, and Companies and Battalions became thoroughly mixed up. (It was afterwards discovered that about 150 of our men, under 2nd Lieut. Good, had been fighting in a party well away to the right flank, and had made excellent progress). However, about 8 a.m., after the line had been stiffened by the addition of two Companies of the 10th Royal Warwicks, a combined attack by the whole line succeeded in driving the enemy back. By this time much had been accomplished in organising carrying parties, which were working satisfactorily, carrying bombs and ammunition to the old German front line to the south of the village, and from a dump formed there up to the firing line. More men also began to come in from isolated parties which had been fighting on their own, and from the mopping-up parties clearing out the dug-outs and trenches behind. The advance was made to a line well beyond the communication trench leading to OVILLERS. A Block was established in this trench as it was passed, and the advance continued; but a counter-attack on the left succeeded in forcing the Block, which caused our line to fall back to a point about half-way through the village. This was the situation at 12 noon, and here the line was consolidated and remained until the Battalion was relieved at 6 a.m. on the 4th July.

Many unrecorded acts of bravery and devotion to duty were performed. The entire action, in fact, resolved itself into a series of individual efforts of Junior Officers and men, rather than a concentrated action. The Battalion had been split up into small parties from the start of the attack, and remained so until it was relieved. In spite of this enormous handicap it had succeeded in penetrating the enemy's stronghold, which had resisted all earlier efforts on the part of units of the 34th Division. It was doubly unfortunate that Major Wedgwood should have been killed at the moment he was—he would doubtless have done much to reorganise the Battalion.

Much of the confusion would have been avoided if orders could have been issued in better time and all ranks had had an opportunity of studying the operations. Ignorance of the plan of attack and the darkness were

responsible for much of the confusion, and the greatest credit is due to all ranks for the brilliant work that was accomplished. Many lessons were learnt during this action, and especially the necessity of supplying full drums of ammunition to the Lewis guns. The equipment issued for this purpose before going into action was found to be useless, and other methods of supply had to be improvised on the spot.

The losses in the action were:—Officers, 12. Other ranks, 272. Details of the Officers' casualties were as follows: *Killed*—Major Cecil Wedgwood, D.S.O., Commanding Battalion; Major J. Carnegie, Commanding B. Company; 2nd Lieut. W. G. Fletcher, Bombing Officer; 2nd Lieut. W. Lawton. *Wounded*—Captain E. J. Colls, Commanding D. Company; Lieut. W. A. Meir, Lieut. J. B. Gidley, 2nd Lieut. D. O. Norman, 2nd Lieut. C. A. Woodward, 2nd Lieut. C. J. Hunter, 2nd Lieut. S. B. Dodman, 2nd Lieut. L. Y. North. The losses amongst the other ranks were: *Killed*, 28. *Wounded*, 210. *Missing*, 34.

On relief by the 56th Brigade the Battalion moved back to the old British front line, where it remained for 24 hours. After another 12 hours in the Tara-Usna line it marched to billets in ALBERT, arriving about 8 p.m. on the 6th July, many of the men wearing German helmets, which were rather proudly exhibited as souvenirs. Major Pott, Royal Welsh Fusiliers, now took temporary command of the Battalion, and the following two days were busily spent in reorganization, during which time a few of the missing men rejoined. These were men who had been cut off from their own Unit and had joined in with other Battalions.

About noon on the 8th July the Battalion received orders to proceed again to the line to stiffen the 56th Brigade and relieve a front line Unit for a period of 24 hours in trenches to which the advance had been continued. These were about two miles from our old front line, overlooking BAZENTIN on the south, with THIEPVAL still holding out on the rear of the north flank. The relief was a very difficult one, owing to the general ignorance of the new positions, the ministrations of the Boche gunners, who served up an extra ration of tear shell gas, and the fact that, whilst we were on the way up, the Battalion which we were relieving had advanced 1,000 yards over ground which had been evacuated by the enemy. It was not until 5-30 a.m. that Companies were finally in position, and very shortly afterwards they were subjected to a particularly heavy bombardment, which increased at times to great violence, and continued until 4 p.m., when the enemy made two bombing attacks, one on our left where a gap existed, and one on our right flank. A few anxious moments were experienced, but the attackers were soon dislodged.

We were relieved on the 10th by the 18th Rifle Brigade, and marched from ALBERT, where the Battalion collected, to bivouac near MILLENCOURT, arriving there about 8 a.m. the 11th July. This tour had been a very strenuous one, and resulted in a casualty list of 4 Officers and 54 other ranks.

Killed—2nd Lieut. C. T. Eaddy. *Wounded*—Captain F. A. Gibson, Captain G. R. Ford, 2nd Lieut. E. B. Thorp. Casualties in other ranks: *Killed*, 8. *Wounded*, 45. *Missing*, 3.

For its share in the fighting during this tour the Battalion received the praise of the Brigade Commander 56th Brigade, in a Note addressed to our own Brigade Commander, as follows:—

“ During the recent operation near LA BOISELLE the 8th North Staffords belonging to your Brigade came under my command. This Battalion took over the front line trenches from the 13th Royal Fusiliers on the night of the 8th/9th July, and remained in possession for 24 hours. During this period they consolidated the trenches and were subjected to a very heavy hostile shelling. On the afternoon of the 9th they repelled two bombing attacks made by the enemy. I deplore the casualties incurred, which under the circumstances were inevitable. The Battalion displayed great coolness and steadiness throughout.

Signed, F. ROWLEY, Brig.-General,
Commanding 56th Infantry Brigade.”

The Battalion now spent eight days in bivouac at MILLENCOURT. There were no billets available and very few tents, but the weather was generally fine, and the men settled down and made themselves as comfortable as circumstances would allow.

The work of refitting, reorganising and training was proceeded with, particularly the training of bombing squads and Lewis gun teams, both of which had suffered very heavily during recent operations. Reinforcements were also received—about 200 men—drawn chiefly from the Dublin Fusiliers and Middlesex Regiments, with only a small sprinkling of North Staffordshire men, who arrived under the command of 2nd Lieut. Campion-Coles and 2nd Lieut. E. C. Hale. This was the beginning of the pernicious system of drafting men to the Regiments requiring reinforcements quite regardless of the Regiments to which they belonged. It eventually resulted in the passing away of the Territorial system almost entirely except in name, and *esprit de corps* suffered accordingly. It was afterwards argued that the exigencies of the service demanded that Units should be filled up immediately casualties occurred, and that this could only be done by a general mixing up of men who happened to be at Base Dépôts at that time.

The following new Officers arrived about this time:—Lt.-Colonel F. W. Parish, Rifle Brigade, to command the Battalion; Major G. S. Crawford, 5th S.W.B., 2nd in command; Captain P. Maughling, 5th S.W.B., commanding D. Company. Major Potts left to join the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

On the 19th July the Battalion left MILLENCOURT for the line, halting for one night in BECOURT Wood, and on the 21st marched to the line via FRICOURT, MAMETZ WOOD, and BAZENTIN-LE-PETIT, and took over the

sector from the Cemetery to the Windmill. The way to the line lay through a valley which had until recently been in the hands of the enemy, and was therefore perfectly well known to his gunners, who placed periodical barrages across it to such good purpose that it became known as "Death Valley." Whilst negotiating "Death Valley," on the way to BAZENTIN-LE-PETIT one Company was caught in a barrage and lost about 30 men. Some trouble was experienced in the relief on account of these barrages, the Company guides having to take their Companies across the open, over ground that was unfamiliar to them. It was late in consequence when "Relief complete" was wired through. We were heavily shelled during this tour, especially the Battalion Headquarters, which was located in the Chalk Pit in some commodious Boche dug-outs, which had probably been used as a Headquarters by the enemy and were therefore an especial mark for his gunners. Although heavy shells were dropped into the Pit with an accuracy that was surprising, the dug-outs which he had been kind enough to leave for us were quite proof against his heaviest shells, and comparative safety was ensured until it became necessary to venture into the open. This was only done on rare occasions by the most venturesome and by those whose duties obliged them to take the risk. The shelling was almost continuous during the tour, but was especially so on the night of the 23rd/24th, when the 56th Brigade and the two Battalions of the 57th Brigade (10th Royal Warwicks and 5th Gloucesters) made an attack on an intermediate line occupied by the enemy on our front. The attack was unsuccessful by the two Battalions of the 57th Brigade: the enemy machine gun posts were still intact and held up all attempts to advance. The enemy put up a heavy barrage by guns of all calibres, and continued to shell our lines until about 5 a.m. The small part which the 8th North Staffords were intended to take in this attack was not carried out at all, as orders were not received until after the attack had started. The reason for this has never been satisfactorily explained, but the blame was put on the runner who conveyed the message.

On the morning of the 24th, in an attempt to establish a strong point about 100 yards N.-E. of the Windmill, a Lewis gun team and a bombing squad were buried by shells. The post was, however, re-established. The Windmill stood on an eminence, was in full view of the enemy, and was a favourite mark for his guns. Anywhere within a fifty yards' radius of it was by no means a health resort, and it was to escape the unwelcome attention of the Boche gunner that the ground for fifty yards on either side of the Windmill was vacated and exchanged for the above-mentioned strong point.

We were relieved by a Battalion of the 58th Brigade on the evening of the 24th, and got away before dark, thereby escaping the nightly shelling. We marched to BECOURT WOOD, and there bivouaced.

The casualty list was a heavy one and included:—*Died of wounds*—2nd Lieut. R. F. Potter. *Wounded*—Major G. S. Crawford, 2nd Lieut. P. G.

Gough, 2nd Lieut. W. Shaw, 2nd Lieut. C. A. S. Booth, 2nd Lieut. W. H. Barklam, 2nd Lieut. F. H. Phillips, 2nd Lieut. M. G. Baker, 2nd Lieut. J. M. Campion-Coles, Lieut. C. H. Masters. Other ranks: *Killed*, 18. *Wounded*, 89. *Missing*, 24.

On the 28th the Battalion went into the line again, to exactly the same spot as the last tour. It was to take part in another attack, the object of which was a switch line running roughly east and north between BAZENTIN and MARTIN PUICH. Patrols had reported that between our front line and the switch line was another line, cleverly sited and concealed, lying just over the brow of a slight hill. Some doubt had existed at first about the correctness of these reports, but they were verified by an air reconnaissance too late to be of use for the attack on the 23rd. It was due to the fact that this intermediate line had not been dealt with by the artillery in the preliminary preparation that this attack failed.

For the new attack the Battalion was in reserve to the 56th Brigade, which had the assistance of two Battalions of the 59th Brigade. On the right and right centre the attack was successful, but on the left it failed from the same cause as on the previous occasion.

In connection with these operations it is of interest to note that the task allotted to the Division in July, viz.: the capture of the intermediate and switch lines, was not finally accomplished until late in September. Successive Divisions failed to capture HIGH WOOD and the intermediate line, and it was not until Tanks were introduced that the task was finally accomplished.

Some idea of the work of the 19th Division during July may be gathered from the fact that the casualty list was 6,500, and that in addition to many other honours, four V.C.'s were awarded for acts of gallantry.

The Battalion was relieved on the 31st, when the whole Division was withdrawn. The casualties during the last tour were:—*Killed*—2nd Lieut. A. G. Saunders. *Wounded*—2nd Lieut. G. Morton, 2nd Lieut. W. T. Lerway, 2nd Lieut. E. C. Hale, 2nd Lieut. G. B. Bolton. Other ranks: *Killed*, 9. *Wounded*, 36. *Missing*, 7.

The Battalion now made its way by easy stages to LONGPRE station, where it entrained for the MESSINES sector. Halts were made at BECOURT WOOD, BRESLE, and L'ETOILE. At BRESLE the 57th Brigade was inspected by the Corps Commander, who thanked Battalions for their work and made a farewell speech on the departure of the Brigade from the Corps. From BRESLE the Battalion marched to MERICOURT, where it entrained for LONGPRE *en route* for L'ETOILE, where a few days was spent in good billets, a luxury which was much appreciated by all ranks. On the 6th August we entrained at LONGPRE and turned our backs on the SOMME, many hoped for ever, but in this we were destined to disappointment.

CHAPTER IV.

MESSINES—SOMME.

WE detrained at BAILLEUL and marched straight into the line near WULVERGHEM, on the MESSINES front, and commenced an almost uneventful month of trench warfare. During this period a raid was planned on the enemy's line, during which it was proposed to release gas, but the contrariness of the prevailing wind caused constant delays and consequent disappointments.

As was usual in these raids, the original plan was altered so often that everyone concerned became completely sick of the whole business. Eventually the raid was made with a handful of men under 2nd Lieut. H. F. Day, who was unfortunately killed whilst entering the enemy's trench, and the raid was not a success. The wind was obstinate to the last, the gas could not be liberated, and the raid had to be made without its assistance, which was one of the reasons for the non-success of the enterprise.

On the 6th September we marched to a new sector a few miles to the south, PLOEGSTEERT, and after three weeks of uneventful line-holding we were relieved by the 1st Battalion South Staffords, 7th Division, who, curiously enough, included many of the men who had been wounded with us at LA BOISELLE a couple of months earlier. Thus there was much hand-shaking and exchange of banter. This finished our period of trench work in the north, and on the 26th September we marched to PRADELLES after having halted one night in METEREN. A very pleasant time was spent at PRADELLES near HAZEBROUCK, for the next three weeks, during which training of all kinds went forward, reinforcements were received, and the Battalion thoroughly organised.

During this period of "rest," the outstanding features were inspections of the 57th Brigade by General (now Lord) Plumer and by H.M. The King of the Belgians. General Plumer presented medal ribbons to a number of Officers, N.C.O's and men, including the Victoria Cross to Lt.-Colonel Carton de Wiatt, D.S.O., 5th Dragoon Guards, then commanding the 8th Battalion Gloucestershire Regiment. Colonel Carton de Wiatt, who had won his V.C. at LA BOISELLE in July, afterwards commanded our Battalion for a short time in January, 1917.

King Albert made a very thorough inspection of the Brigade, and was kind enough to speak in very high terms of its appearance and bearing. The Commanding Officer, who at the time was Major H. W. Dakeyne, Royal Warwickshire Regiment, acting for Lieut.-Colonel Parish on leave, had the honour of lunching with His Majesty after the parade, and was accorded an interview with him afterwards.

This very pleasant period was, however, not to end without a most regretful episode. On the eve of our leaving PRADELLES, the Battalion Bombing Officer, 2nd Lieut. Bunce, and the Bombing N.C.O., Corporal Hughes, while instructing a class, were killed by the premature explosion of a bomb. This sad accident cast a gloom over the whole Battalion, and their death was a severe loss to us. Corporal Hughes, a finely-built man, over six feet in height, had been known to throw a bomb 73 yards. Lieut. Bunce, young, keen and enthusiastic, was a particularly good instructor, and a general favourite with everyone. They were buried the following day at HAZEBROUCK.

The 6th October found us bound for the SOMME area for the second time. Entrainment took place at BAILLEUL and detrainment at DOULLENS, and after one night at THIEVRES we marched to the BOIS-DE-WARIMONT, where accommodation was provided in huts. A fortnight was spent in this wood, during which attack in artillery formation was practiced, and parties were sent up to HEBUTERNE, about seven miles away, to inspect the line in view of a possible offensive from this part of the front which, however, did not materialise, and we were suddenly moved on the 17th October by cross-country route to WARLOY, to take part in a totally different attack scheme. Four days later we moved forward another stage, by march, to the Brickfields near ALBERT, where we bivouaced for the night under wintry conditions. The 22nd October broke with a tremendous artillery bombardment by our guns, which we afterwards learnt was the artillery preliminary to the taking of "Stuff" and "Regina" trenches, which we were to occupy that night, and after spending 24 hours there, to continue the advance through GRANDECOURT, a scheme which we felt fully capable of executing. The Battalion was up to full strength. A very high standard of *esprit-de-corps* existed, and the men seemed eager and spoiling for a fight when they marched off from the Brickfields to take over the above-named trenches, passing on their way scenes of their former fight at LA BOISSELLE.

Almost immediately on the Battalion's taking over the line bad weather set in, a sharp frost, followed by heavy rain, soon had the whole ground, which was scarred with shell holes and loose earth, churned up into a sea of clinging mud.

Of all the periods hitherto spent in the line, in all the many sectors we had occupied, and of all the various experiences we had undergone, since landing in France, it was unanimously agreed that this time we were faced with something that was far worse than anything we had imagined.

The whole country had, for the past four months, been deluged with shells from both sides, with the result that every foot of it had been blown up time and again. It was not so much a question of the shell holes touching each other, the ground was one enormous shell hole. THIEPVAL, the scene of some of the bitterest fighting of the SOMME Battle, was within a few hundred yards of "Stuff Redoubt," and the advance here, since 1st July, had only

penetrated a few thousand yards. On this small area had been concentrated an intensity of shell fire hitherto unprecedented. The effect of bad weather on the heavy clay soil, ploughed up as it had been, can be better imagined than described.

The traffic over this ground was enormous: R.E. material to consolidate our newly-won position, and to build footpaths and corduroy tracks, ammunition to feed the insatiable guns (which were everywhere), rations, water, Red Cross stores, everything had to traverse this quagmire, and many men and animals were literally engulfed in the clinging mud, some never to be extricated. The struggles of the mules and horses were bad enough; those of the men, loaded with rifles, ammunition, equipment and sometimes rations as well, were beyond description. There was one man of the Battalion, who slipped up in a fresh shell hole, in the so-called front line trench, and was buried up to his armpits for 26 hours, despite every effort made to dig or drag him out. One heard stories of men stuck in the mud and only extricated by the timely arrival of a mule, to which they were harnessed and thus dragged from the clinging, sticky, stuff. Some there were who were never rescued, the damp and intense cold of the mud in which they were caught proving too much for their tired bodies: all they could do was to crave a speedy death from the rifle of a friend.

No wonder everyone was dog-tired, even after one short spell in the line, and the so-called resting out of the line was little better. The billets we were given were at the best ruined houses in AVELOY village. Usually it was a case of bivouacing in dug-outs in the old German front and support lines, or shivering under improvised shelters of odd pieces of corrugated iron covered with a ground sheet. Once we were actually given Nissen huts, which were being hurriedly erected; but there were only four for the whole Battalion, and so crowded and muddy that a great number of men preferred to sleep under, rather than in the hut. Luckily, being built on a slope, there was just room to crawl underneath.

It was highly desirable that the attack, which was planned to take place immediately, should take place at the earliest possible moment, but the bad weather necessitated day to day postponements. The enemy's shelling was continuous and exceptionally severe. We were relieved after two days by the 8th Gloucesters, and had a very trying time getting clear of the line. Some idea of the state of the ground may be gained from the fact that some of the men took 25 hours to traverse the distance (about three miles) from the line to billets. Accommodation was found for the Battalion in dug-outs in the old German front line, close to two of our Batteries (a 60-pounder and 18-pounder), which were almost continuously firing over our heads. Casualties were severe during this tour, 78 "other ranks" in all. It should be mentioned that a determined enemy counter-attack on the day after taking over the line was beaten off with heavy losses to the enemy.

Inter-Battalion reliefs took place while the bad weather continued. The next tour in the line resulted in a casualty list of 1 killed, 21 wounded, and 5 missing. Many casualties were also being suffered from sickness owing to the bad weather conditions. All units were being greatly reduced in numbers with each tour in the line, and the morale of the troops was suffering under the strain of the general conditions. The C.O., Lt.-Colonel F. W. Parish, was evacuated sick, and the Command devolved upon Lt.-Colonel C. L. Anderson on the 1st November. The Battalion had another tour in the line from the 9th to the 12th November, after which it was accommodated in Marlborough Huts at "Crucifix Corner," near AVELOY. During this time some attempt was made at training, and many conferences took place on the subject of proposed operations. A general ignorance of the situation was apparent from the first, which was a characteristic of the whole SOMME offensive. Delays, postponements, orders, and counter-orders had succeeded in shaking the confidence of all ranks. It was therefore with not a very high standard of enthusiasm that the 57th Brigade took over the line on the night of the 17th November with a view to attacking GRANDECOURT on the 18th November at 6 a.m., at which hour the attack was launched. It must be here mentioned that for the last two days the ground had been hardened by frost, but again became a quagmire on the morning of the 18th, owing to a thaw setting in, and to add to the difficulties a blizzard of fine snow made observation impossible for more than a few yards ahead.

The Battalion was commanded by Lt.-Colonel Anderson, and Companies by 2nd Lieut. Duffy, Lieut. Mackay, Captain James, and Captain Maughfling.

At "Zero" hour on the 18th November the 57th Brigade attacked in line with four Battalions. The two left Battalions advanced well and reached their objectives, but the two right Battalions were not so successful.

This Battalion advanced a long way, but in the darkness and blizzard passed over the enemy's trench system, and the Germans, moving up from their dug-outs, cut off practically the whole of the Battalion.

The Battalion, at the commencement of this operation, consisted of 18 Officers and about 420 other ranks. Only one Officer and about 100 other ranks returned. Captain G. P. Smith, who had been left behind as a first reinforcement, proceeded to "Stuff Redoubt" to collect and command the remnants, and to arrange for defence until they were relieved.

The total casualty list was 17 Officers, and 317 other ranks:—*Wounded and prisoners*—Lt.-Colonel Anderson, Captain G. F. James, Captain Maughfling. *Killed*—Lieut. F. C. Mackay, 2nd Lieut. P. G. H. Howells. *Wounded*—Lieut. F. C. Good, Lieut. N. F. Cooke. *Missing*—Lieut. C. V. Turner, 2nd Lieut. A. N. Duffy, 2nd Lieut. S. F. London, 2nd Lieut. H. L. Gwynne, 2nd Lieut. G. B. Bolton, 2nd Lieut. J. H. Adams, 2nd Lieut. W. D. Henderson, 2nd Lieut. A. S. Hughes, 2nd Lieut. E. Campbell. *Severely*

wounded and missing—Captain and Adjutant Standbridge, Regimental Sergt.-Major A. Wilson.

From the very few names of Officers and men received later as actually prisoners, and from stories told by those who eventually got back home after the Armistice, there is little doubt that the Battalion made a great fight for it before, attacked from front and rear, they were overwhelmed.

It is much regretted that no further details can be given regarding the missing. In some cases confirmation of death has been received by relatives, in other cases death has been presumed.

The remnants of the Battalion were relieved on the night of the 19th, and were accommodated in Marlborough Huts, where Major H. W. Dakeyne took over command, and three days later made their way by route march by easy stages to LONGUE VILLETTÉ in the DOULLENS area. Here the Battalion was billeted for about six weeks, during which time reinforcements of men and Officers were received. Christmas found the Battalion about 650 strong, enjoying an excellent Christmas dinner arranged by Major J. C. C. Thomas, second in command. The following were the Senior Officers with the Battalion at this time:—Lt.-Colonel H. W. Dakeyne, Commanding Officer; Major J. C. C. Thomas, second in command; Captain G. P. Smith, A. Company; Captain C. F. Bill, B. Company; Major Shakespeare, C. Company; Major J. J. O'Sullivan, D. Company; Lieut. F. T. Snook, D.C.M., Adjutant; Lieut. F. Crewe, Quartermaster; Captain A. H. Bainbridge, Transport Officer.

Battalion training and organization claimed our whole attention during the weeks spent here, and on January 15th, 1917, the new and efficient-looking Battalion turned trenchwards again. After a short march to AUTHUILE, where one night was spent, the Battalion embussed for SAILLY-AU-BOIS, and forthwith commenced a tour of trench duty in the HEBUTERNE sector, a few miles north of the scene of our disastrous attack in November.

During the next month inter-Company and inter-Battalion reliefs were the only variation in the usual trench warfare. The Boche gunners served out a good daily ration of shells of the field gun and 5·9 varieties to the village of HEBUTERNE and surrounding country, causing many casualties. Much hardship was endured by the troops on account of the severe wintry conditions prevalent about this time, and a good word is due to the excellent organization which enabled the Commanding Officer to render a blank return of "Trench Foot" cases, a record no other Battalion in the Division could equal. The many gifts of socks, mufflers, mittens, etc., contributed by many kind friends at home, was in no small degree responsible for this excellent state of affairs. All ranks of the Battalion fully appreciated the efforts made on their behalf by all their friends, and especially by Mrs. Cecil Wedgwood and Mrs. Locker, whose contributions were most regular.

A general re-shuffle of the line necessitated the 19th Division easing off a little to the south, and the next sector occupied by the 8th North Staffords



OFFICERS, 1916.

was opposite SERRE, the scene of very severe and unsuccessful fighting at the commencement of the SOMME offensive. Wintry conditions and the absence of any but small sectors of trench line were responsible for the introduction of a system of holding the line, which later became more or less general, and was really nothing more than the old system of outposts. The front line consisted of a series of posts of about a dozen or less men, with perhaps a Lewis gun, and the way to these posts was by a winding path, over the mud, which threaded its way amongst the craters of the shell-holed ground. These tracks were plainly visible in the snow, which was the precursor of the long period of hard frosts at the beginning of the year 1917. Life in the trenches resolved itself into a mere struggle for existence, and the usual warlike operations were more or less at a standstill. Daily artillery duels still continued, however, chiefly at the set times of dawn and dusk, at which times the experience of long months of the SOMME battle had led both sides to be prepared for attacks. Periods in trenches opposite SERRE were varied by the usual rests in billets at COURCELLES, BUS, and BERTRANCOURT, etc., brightened by occasional visits to DOUILLENS and dinners of partridges, which were in large numbers on the snow-covered ground.

The difficulty was, of course, to kill them. Guns were at a premium; there were one or two very old and decrepit French guns to be borrowed, but cartridges were absolutely non-existent. One ingenious and foolhardy Officer did try the experiment of emptying a Stoke's trench mortar 12-bore cartridge of half its charge of ballistite, and filling it up with small bits of metal and odds and ends. The gun actually stood two of these rounds and he bagged a brace; the third, as he rightly expected, burst the gun—luckily for him merely cutting his forehead badly.

The usual weapon employed for the sport was the rifle; but a partridge is a small mark, and even in France, behind the line, one had to take a few precautions about killing such things as soldiers or even civilians. However, the rifle was used with great success up in the front line; if the bullet hit a German instead, well, so much the better.

The Mills' bomb or a rifle grenade sometimes was a very efficient weapon. Given a covey quite still on the snow, and at the right distance away, a skilful man could usually down a brace and a half. A large amount of skill was essential. If the bomb or grenade fell into the covey before exploding the birds had time to get up; if it burst too high in the air it merely frightened them. The ideal was to choose your range so that you got an air burst some 10 feet from the ground, and then the slaughter was terrific and the joy proportional. Besides, it was good training in rifle bombing.

During one of these periods of rest at COURCELLES, on the 1st February, 1917, the Battalion was honoured by a visit from H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, attended by Captain Lord Claud Hamilton. After lunch with the Officers he

inspected the Battalion on parade, being subjected meanwhile to the attentions of the Army photographer, a sample of whose handiwork appeared in the press shortly afterwards.

This was a great occasion in the history of the Battalion, and it is perhaps needless to state that the kindness of the Prince and the absence of formality were very affecting, and the honour done to the Battalion was much appreciated.

The cold weather continued, and was from one point of view very welcome, as the ground hitherto a quagmire was now firm and practicable for walking over. An issue of leather jerkins did something towards keeping out the intense cold, and by constant movement and knocking the icicles off one's mouth and nose it was just possible to keep from getting frozen up.

About the end of February the absence of habitual signs of life in the Boche trenches began to be even more marked. It became obvious that the proverbial holding of their line by two men and a boy was not far from the truth. "Otto's" job was to hammer in stakes at night and withdraw them by day, to give the impression of working parties. "Carl" was a sniper by day, and at night walked miles with a very light pistol, which he popped off at different spots. While "Hans," the boy, was probably responsible for the rations and for the sounds of a feminine voice which gave rise to frequent rumours of "Frau's" living in the trenches. Patrols soon discovered that these signs were only a bluff and that a retirement was actually in progress, and once again we were awakened to the possibilities and actuality of open warfare. It was only, however, during the first few days of the advance, that our Battalion took part.

The 57th Brigade was holding some posts known as "Matthew," "Mark," "Luke" and "John" copses, when information was received that the 7th Division on our right had pushed patrols into SERRE, and finding it unoccupied had pushed forward. A corresponding advance was hastily organised on our front, and the 8th North Staffords, who were at the time in reserve at BUS and BERTRANCOURT, were hurried into the line and had to make immediate preparations for an advance. One Company, led by a Divisional Staff Officer, preceded the remainder of the Battalion, moving to a position in line with the 7th Division by the SERRE-PUISIEUX road, in an old German trench line shown on maps as "Rhine Trench." It was a move seriously hampered by haste and gum boots, and it was a long, straggling line that came up just in time to find the 7th Division preparing for a further exploitation towards PUISIEUX-AU-MONT, where there were apparently only a few snipers. The Company was formed up into waves for an advance, but had not moved far over the open ground before a machine gun opened fire on the line, when it was decided to resort to a more organised attack and thereby avoid unnecessary losses. This attack was carried out with the 7th Division with success, and the garrison of PUISIEUX was captured the same evening.



H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES—MARCH PAST.

At this point the Battalion was withdrawn from further participation in these operations, the 19th Division having already been earmarked for later operations on the MESSINES front.

A week was spent at COURCELLES, during which the whole Battalion was employed daily in laying a railway line, which was, however, still very incomplete when on the 9th March we marched from COURCELLES bound for the north. It was a pity to have to leave the scene just when things were getting interesting, but the SOMME had never proved an attractive part of the front, and as there were possibilities of better things in the sector to which we were going, regrets at leaving were few.

CHAPTER V.

WYTSCHAETE—MESSINES RIDGE.

AFTER several days' marching, resting at billets *en route* at LOUVEN-COURT, GEZAINCOURT, BONNIERS, CROISSETTE, HESTRUS, EQUEDECQUES, THIENNES, and MERRIS, we came in sight of BAILLEUL, and renewed acquaintance with the front from MT. KEMMEL to YPRES. Trenches in front of RIDGEWOOD and the BRASSERIE made us familiar with the sight of the WYTSCHAETE-MESSINES RIDGE, which it had now become generally known was to be one of the objectives of the year's summer offensive.

At the beginning of April the Division, with the exception of the artillery, moved back for a rest and for training in offensive action; but the rest was broken off by alterations in the re-shuffling of corps, and at the beginning of May the Battalion moved further north and spent a few trying days in its first taste of the old YPRES salient.

A week spent in the line at "Sanctuary Wood," "Amagh Wood," and on "Observatory Ridge," was not without its bits of excitement, for the usual activity here was well sustained and the shelling particularly unpleasant. The Battalion came in for its fair share of a box barrage laid by the enemy as a preliminary to a raid on the 10th Royal Warwick Regiment on our right, during which several casualties were incurred. Here we saw the wonders of mining operations which had been prepared, and the extensive tunnellings which stretched out as far as HILL 60, where the largest mine yet laid (and which was to be one of the features of the MESSINES RIDGE attack) was already fully prepared.

Plans, however, were changed, and the 19th Division was returned to the 9th Corps, and we again occupied the line opposite GRAND BOIS, with Battalion Headquarters at the BRASSERIE near RIDGE WOOD. Our Divisional Commander, Major-General Tom Bridges (now Lt-General Sir T. Bridges, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O.) was temporarily away on a mission to AMERICA, and his place was taken by Major-General Shute (now Major-General Sir C. D. Shute, K.C.B., K.C.M.G.)

The 57th Brigade, and the Battalion in particular, were originally earmarked for a very minor part in the operations. We were merely to act as "moppers up" to another Brigade in the Division, the 58th. We were thankful, however, when, on the 24th May, the two Companies who had been sent to the 58th Brigade for practice, returned to the Battalion, and we learnt that our Brigade was now destined to play a leading part in the operations.

A few more days were spent in the line at the BRASSERIE, and when we left on 29th May, we knew that the next time we were up we should, instead of occupying our own trenches, go forward and occupy those of the Huns.



LIEUT.-COLONEL H. W. DAKEYNE, D.S.O.

Lieut.-Colonel Henry Woolryche Dakeyne was born in 1886, son of the late Lieut.-Colonel Henry Fitzroy Dakeyne, Indian Army. He was educated at Wellington College, Blundell's School, and the R.M.C. Sandhurst. His first Commission was in 1906. He served in South Africa, India, and West Africa. He was in the Mohmand Expedition, 1908 (Medal and Clasp), the Cameroon Expeditionary Force, 1914, and the European War. In July, 1916, he commanded the 10th Royal Warwick, and in November, 1916, he was appointed to the command of the 8th North Staffords, with whom he saw a great deal of service in France, receiving the D.S.O. in 1917, and being five times mentioned in Despatches, with a bar to the D.S.O. Brevet Lieut.-Colonel on promotion to Major in June, 1918. He is an Officer of the Legion of Honour of France.

There had already been a good deal of artillery preparation, chiefly wire cutting and counter battery work; but the woods in front of us, and the country as a whole, was still green, or rather green-looking. The artillery preliminary bombardment did not really start till a day or two later, and when we next saw that bit of country and those woods, on the evening of 6th June, one could hardly realise it was the same. It was as brown and bare as the Sahara—guns had searched every inch of it. They and a week's fine weather had effected a complete change. And even then only a proportion of our batteries had been firing, the rest had kept silent for fear of giving away their positions and numbers. They were to come as an unpleasant surprise to the enemy on the 7th.

After being relieved on the night of the 29th May we were accommodated in tents at KEMPTON CAMP, near WESTOUTRE, where a few days of intensive training in plans that had again been altered took place. These days were taken up in strenuous activity—studying of aeroplane photographs, fitting up, learning the artillery programme, and systematising plans to a hitherto unknown degree, so that the attack was worked out to the last detail and nothing left to chance.

The task now allotted to the 57th Brigade was the capture and consolidation of what was known as the "Black Line," which meant for the Battalion a line parallel to and about 100 yards west of OOSTAVERNE WOOD. Two nearer lines were allotted to the other Brigades, to be captured, mopped, and consolidated. Over these lines the 57th Brigade was to pass by the leap-frog system; starting some two hours after the opening of the attack.

On the night of the 6th June units advanced to their assembly positions along parallel cross-country tracks, known by the official titles of "W," "X," etc., from the staging camps in the region of WESTOUTRE. The position allotted to our Battalion was the Support Trenches from BOIS CONFLUENT to BOIS CARRÉ, with its Headquarters at "Dead Dog Farm," which was occupied an hour or so before "Zero." A little desultory shelling, hasty last instructions, issue of chewing gum and rum, and the general bustle did not leave much time for experiencing the sinking feeling of anticipation of unpleasantness that usually precedes going over the top.

"Zero" hour on "Z" day, 7th June, 1917, was 3-10 a.m. At this moment there was a complete transformation in the stillness of the early dawn. It was still almost dark, and what little shelling there had been during the night had, for the past half-hour, completely died away. A few early birds were twittering, even the incessant noise of the past week had not been enough to frighten them away, besides, by this time they were used to such disturbances, otherwise there was complete silence.

It was really a marvellous piece of timing. Simultaneously, along the seven-mile front, nineteen enormous mines burst with a dull roar, and as many crimson flamed eruptions. Even while one staggered with the explosions and

trembled with the shaking earth, the whole country behind broke into one pandemonium with a single crash, as if every gun had been fired by the pressing of an electric contact lever.

Situated as we were, between the guns and the front line, the impression was not so much of what could be seen—mist—smoke—red glare—and flashes of light—as of the stupendous rending of the air by noise, and the concussion as of an earthquake. For a time, probably only a few seconds, although it seemed much longer, the effect was stunning. It was so unbelievable, so unimaginable: not one of us had thought that such a noise was possible, and we were left aghast in surprise that such a thing could be. Of course we were only a little way in front of the most forward guns, the field guns barking at the rate almost of machine gun fire; further back the reverberations of the heavies, and everywhere the infernal clatter of the Vickers' giving overhead covering fire.

It was impossible to make oneself heard, except by shouting into the ear of the person one wanted to talk to.

For two and a half hours we had to sit still and do nothing except listen and wait for the answering barrage from the enemy. Except for a few heavies this last pleasure was denied us, and no wonder, poor devils, they must have had a hot time on their side.

All along their line, of course, as soon as our barrage opened, they sent up innumerable rockets and lights, and one could see them repeated far back in the rear; but apart from this their resistance at the start was very slight.

The noise continued, but one's nerves grew accustomed to the strain, and at the appointed time the Battalion began to move forward in columns of Platoons in artillery formation, picking its way at first with difficulty over our own wire, but more easily as it approached the ground already won, where countless craters obliterated all recognisable sign of what had once been the enemy's trench system. So difficult indeed was it to find the trace of any landmark, that at first a slight loss of direction deflected the advance, and it was only by a close study of maps, the use of the compass and frequent consultation, that the right direction was regained. Given time, however, the advance continued steadily in the right direction, over the already captured objectives, now displaying a signboard with their official title, past scattered groups of incoming Hun prisoners left to find their own way to the rear, past the relic of a dug-out, where Armitage, "the Doctor," established his aid post and sent out thence a man with small yellow flags to follow the advance and plant them to show the way to where his useful work was done—till the foremost line of men was reached, waiting behind the barrage to do their next bound forward. "Huns militant" there were none to be seen. Dead Huns were also scarce, but prisoners in scores. These one could see advance in groups, terror-stricken and hands uplifted, towards an advancing Tank, and

surrendering anew to every fresh group of men they met, offering watches, revolvers, and other inducements to mercy.

Deployment into extended lines or waves was made on passing over the last captured objective, and our Brigade, with ourselves on the left, now became the leading troops. A short advance of about 400 yards brought our leading line, following the "creeping barrage," to OOSTAVERNE WOOD. Here the barrage rested, and one could admire the wonderful accuracy of the shooting which placed shells on so definite a line. The sounds were different now, the firing of guns being far behind, and the noise being that of the explosion of the shells.

The western outskirts of OOSTAVERNE WOOD were our final objective, with orders to make good the wood itself and the far edge. This was done by pivoting on our left Company, D. Company, and sending one other to clear the wood. The two other Companies commenced digging as hard as they could as counter-attacks were apt to come suddenly, and the Staffordshire knack of digging well and hard was again more than proved. OOSTAVERNE WOOD hid many large concrete dug-outs, and every one contributed its quota of cowed prisoners and testified to the luxury enjoyed by the Boche gunners. The number captured was creeping up. They showed little fight, even as far back from their front line as this was.

Our guns were still putting down a protective barrage some 150' east of the wood; this, however, did not deter Lieut. Carver and Private Cartwright from calmly walking through it to see what they could find out about the enemy on its far side. They succeeded in getting through and back safely, and the information they brought was of very material use. Both Lieut. Carver and Private Cartwright received immediate awards for their feat afterwards.

About 800 yards east of the wood also, close to OOSTAVERNE village, a few of the leading line had the opportunity of seeing the Boche field guns firing over open sights. Before the actual attack could reach them they abandoned their guns under the heavy fire, after an unsuccessful attempt to move them.

It was now about 1 o'clock. An enigmatical message was received at Battalion Headquarters which read "New Zero hour 3 p.m." As this conveyed "nothing to nobody" very little attention was paid to it; but eventually written orders were received for a further advance to be undertaken by our (57th) Brigade in conjunction with fresh Divisions on our right and left. We were evidently to exploit our success. The Battalion was detailed to follow in support of two other Battalions of the Brigade, and our objective was OOSTAVERNE village and "Odonto Trench," north-east of the village, a stretch of the German reserve system known as the OOSTAVERNE line. There was no time to issue detailed orders, but, although the idea seemed none too easy, all had so far gone so well that it was hoped that hastily

improvised orders would meet the situation. Colonel Dakeyne therefore sent for Company Commanders and issued verbal instructions, and at 3 o'clock the advance again commenced, and we had to leave our beautiful newly-dug trenches for someone else's benefit.

Although we were detailed to support and remain in rear of the other two, so eager were the men that they outstripped everyone else, and, capturing the Battery which had been firing over open sights earlier in the day, they were first into the village and "Odonto Trench," and would have gone on indefinitely had not our own barrage ceased to creep forward and prevented them. A large number of prisoners were captured, and the rounding up of pockets of the enemy provided some excellent, though unfortunately, not bloodless sport.

Later Companies were brought back, and were placed in positions less forward and more in keeping with a Battalion in support.

Towards the evening OOSTAVERNE proved something of a death-trap, the danger being from our own shells dropping short. A very difficult and unpleasant situation was saved by the unflinching tenacity of men determined not to lose what had already been won. It was, unfortunately, not before some casualties had occurred, that word reached the offending guns and the mistake was rectified.

The night was spent in patrolling, consolidating with material brought up by a specially detailed carrying party, which had followed the Battalion during the advance, reorganizing the line and establishing communications. One of the features of the attack which had been particularly noticeable was the work of the aeroplanes, which had flown over in abundance. At definite times flares were lighted by the front line to indicate positions to the low-flying contact planes. One of these planes was unfortunately hit by one of our own 18-pounder shells, and crashed, a crumpled wreck, in OOSTAVERNE. At the village cross-roads the scene of desolation was a squalid one, typical of the devastating effect of our shell fire. Scattered shell cases, a dead horse in the middle of the road, a large notice board with the legend "Nach St. Eloi," relics of R.E. dumps, twisted lengths of light railway lines, and many other signs of confusion. Below lay a derelict Tank, which had broken down after sticking in the mud some four hundred yards in front of the advance. On the hills opposite occasional bursts of machine gun fire gave evidence of posts that were still holding on, or had been pushed up, and occasional pockets of Huns scattered about in shell holes gave opportunities for sniping which were used to the utmost and accounted for many of our casualties.

After a quiet night it was found that one Company (A.) was still in the front line, and a series of daylight raids were quickly organised to advance and "mop up" the enemy, who could be seen in small numbers opposite the Company, and who were commencing to "snipe" somewhat heavily. One

raid produced 12 men and another 27, and a number were killed in their dug-outs, from which they refused to emerge.

Captain J. Bell afterwards received the Military Cross for the good work he did on this morning.

A little later the Boche guns appeared to have recovered some interest in the proceedings, and commenced to plaster the ground indiscriminately with shells, and towards evening, after a heavy bombardment, a counter-attack was launched, which broke down before reaching our lines. "Odonto Trench," in the old Hun reserve line, was well constructed, though it was faced the wrong way and proved an unpleasant spot for us, thanks to the ministrations of the Boche gunners. Early next morning the 57th Brigade was withdrawn to the black line, just behind OOSTAVERNE WOOD, which, except for occasional 8 inch shells, was comparatively quiet. The following evening a relief took place, and we were sent back for a day or two to KEMPTON CAMP.

After a hard time in the line (and by "hard" is meant those ordinary periods of holding the line when one's daily lot is the expectation of becoming "cannon fodder") the experience of being relieved is a memorable one. The time of waiting with kit packed up for the relieving troops to arrive is full of expectancy, and hangs heavy if the relief should be at all late. But it comes at last and, duties handed over, men file out into the open, and in a thin line lose no time in picking their way back over the long journey to rest billets, seeing with increasing pleasure the Verey lights soaring into the darkness at a greater distance, weary and footsore, but kept up by the prospect of comparative comfort, till the road is reached. Then a march through the night till there comes at last the welcome sight of billets—often only a very poor apology—where hot tea and sometimes rum are waiting, and then for a long sleep well into the morning, after which, a brush up, a bath, a game of football, and life is worth living again.

The casualties during this action were about 140 all ranks, which was considerably less than the number of prisoners taken. They included:—
Killed—2nd Lieut. R. Shackleton. *Wounded*—Captain C. F. Bill, Lieut. H. C. Maule, 2nd Lieut. J. Bell, Captain G. W. Armstrong, R.A.M.C.; Captain F. A. S. Gibson, 2nd Lieut. J. S. Maguire. Other ranks: *Killed*, 18. *Wounded*, 108. *Missing*, 7.

On the 10th June the Battalion moved back on relief to WESTON CAMP, near SCHERPENBERG HILL, where, two days later, the 57th Brigade was inspected by the (Temporary) Divisional Commander, Major-General Shute, C.B., who complimented all ranks on its gallant conduct in recent operations.

The following congratulatory messages were received :—

DIVISIONAL COMMANDER.

“ The Divisional Commander wishes to take the earliest opportunity of conveying to all ranks of the Division his most hearty congratulations on their splendid work to-day.

“ Every movement has gone like clockwork, and, in spite of the heat and long hours, the men have never slacked off and have worked magnificently.

“ The artillery has never failed us, and has been simply perfect throughout, and we all recognise that it is its work to-day and during the preliminary bombardment which has made the task of the infantry possible.

“ The Divisional Commander wishes particularly to convey his personal thanks to all ranks, who have proved their Division to be one of the finest in the Army.

“ (Signed) C. HEWLETT,

“ Lt.-Colonel, General Staff.”

CORPS COMMANDER.

Part of a letter sent to 19th Division by G.O.C. 9th Corps, 17/6/17.

“ The capture of the central position of the Ridge and of the OOSTAVERNE line was carried out by the 9th Corps in conjunction with similar operations by the 2nd Anzac and 10th Corps on either flank, with a dash and precision which has called forth the highest commendation of the Army Commander and the G.O.C., has elicited a most gracious message of approval and pride in his troops by H.M. the King. This brilliant success was due to the excellent combination of effort on the part of all arms and services, whether belonging to the Corps or attached by co-operation with them.

“ As regards the fighting troops, the Division have worked hard in preparing themselves for the battle, and, when the time came, carried their successive objectives in the face of strenuous opposition by the enemy, with an irresistible determination which resulted in the capture of the whole of the furthest objectives allotted for the day, and in a manner which maintains the high honour of the British Troops, and reflects the greatest credit on their Commanders of every grade.

“ Every Officer and man concerned must feel that his bravery and initiative were the determining factors in the complete overthrow of the enemy along the whole line, and in the consternation which his enforced retreat for a mile or more beyond must have produced on the German Higher Command.

“ (Signed) J. PERCY, Brig.-General,

“ General Staff, 5th Corps.”

Copy of a wire received from Major-General T. Bridges, C.M.G., D.S.O., Commanding 19th Division, on temporary duty with the British Mission in AMERICA.

"Please tender heartiest congratulations to all ranks for magnificent success in recent operations."

Message from G.O.C. 57th Brigade to 8th North Stafford Regiment, 7/6/17.

"The Corps and Divisional Commanders have asked me to forward to you all their most cordial congratulations and thank you for your splendid success.

"(Signed) T. ASTLEY CUBITT, Brig.-General."

Four days of general cleaning up and refitting at WESTON CAMP followed, and on the 15th June we went back to the line again in the OOSTAVERNE sector, where much work was required on the trench system as result of recent operations, and a very strenuous four days of hard work with pick and shovel were spent, during which the Boche intermittently shelled the OOSTAVERNE road and wood, to vary the otherwise uninteresting time.

On the 19th the Battalion was relieved, and, after one night at LOCRE, marched to camp near ST. JAN'S CAPEL, which was afterwards known as "Stafford" Camp, where an altogether quiet but pleasant ten days was spent. Training was varied with many football matches, Battalion and Brigade sports. It was therefore with a certain amount of regret that we left "Stafford" Camp *en route* for the line on the 1st July, 1917, and took over the trenches at DENYS, RAVINE, and PHEASANT WOODS, which are situated a little north of the scene of our recent successes at OOSTAVERNE. The next ten days were spent in making extensive improvements to the trenches. An immense amount of work was accomplished in this respect and casualties were comparatively slight. On the 9th July, D. Company, in conjunction with the 8th Gloucesters on its right, made an advance on "Junction Buildings," a point of vantage which had been giving a great deal of trouble. A very dashing and gallant attempt was made, which, however, just failed to reach its objective, owing to the extremely hot machine gun fire. The operation was not persisted with when it was found that the right of the attack had just failed to reach its objective.

Unfortunately this small operation cost us Captain A. R. Selfe and three men killed, and three men wounded.

On the following day 2nd Lieut. Carver did some very valuable reconnaissance work, very gallantly going beyond "Tool Farm" in broad daylight, under a heavy enemy sniping fire.

Tours of trench duty were varied by periods in reserve at "Siege Farm," near KEMMEL, during which we were continuously employed on working parties. One of these parties, under 2nd Lieut. F. Clarke, suffered very heavy casualties whilst passing a bomb dump, which was receiving the attention

of the Boche gunners. A shell was dropped in the dump, which became ignited and caused the following casualties:—*Killed*—Six other ranks. *Wounded*—2nd Lieut. F. Clarke and 33 other ranks.

On the 29th we were withdrawn from this sector to take part in operations in conjunction with the 5th Army and with the French Army north of YPRES. During this relief Lieut. F. G. W. Boulton was killed by a sudden burst of enemy machine gun fire. After one night at Birr Barracks, LOCRE, we were moved to "Beaver Corner," near KEMMEL, in reserve to the 56th Brigade.

On the 31st July the next phase of the 3rd Battle of YPRES took place, the start of the wearisome battle against mud and pill-boxes, which did not terminate until after the capture of PASSCHENDAELE later in the year. We only came in for the aftermath of the first day's fighting, when we relieved the 56th Brigade in the occupation of the trenches in the valley of the ROOSEBECKE, in the HOLLEBEKE sector, where the chief features of the situation were intense artillery activity, and occasional small attacks for local vantage points. Here we remained for several tours.

On the 5th August an enemy raid in the vicinity of HOLLEBEKE was the occasion of a very gallant action on the part of 2nd Lieut. H. F. Gough and Company Sergt.-Major Amos, which gained for them the D.S.O. and the D.C.M. respectively. The front line was held by a series of posts. Opposite the left of the left flank Company post an attack developed, after a heavy bombardment, on a small vantage point known as "Forret Farm," which was held by a Battalion of the Division on our left. The garrison was dislodged by the attack and retired, until met by 2nd Lieut. H. F. Gough, who, with the assistance of C.S.M. Amos, rallied the men, and dividing them into three converging attacking parties immediately counter-attacked. He led the centre party himself and came under heavy machine gun fire about 50 yards from the farm. The mist, which had hitherto obscured what was happening, here assisted him; but the farm was not reached until his party was reduced to a mere handful, and with these he charged the position and dislodged the Germans, who retreated in disorder throwing hand grenades and firing. About ten prisoners were taken, including an officer, who was surprised in a dug-out in the act of writing a report on the successful capture of the position by the Germans.

Two days later we were relieved by a Battalion of the 37th Division, and marched to "Stafford" Camp, via MT. NOIR, in very wet weather. After two more days, during which the Battalion was paraded and addressed by Brig.-General T. A. Cubitt, and complimented on the successful operations and good work done in the trenches since June, we entrained at BAILLEUL, *en route* for WISERNES, for a period of rest of about four weeks, which was spent at QUESQUES and BELLEBRUNE, within easy reach of BOULOGNE, whither on one occasion the Battalion was conveyed by lorries and treated to a sea bathe, which was much appreciated. An all-round enjoyable time was spent during

this period. Training was judiciously varied by football matches and sports of all kinds, including a point-to-point meeting, in which "Tommy," the charger of O.C. A. Company, admirably ridden by Captain B. S. Hancock, only just failed to justify the confidence reposed in him, by finishing third in a large field.

An outstanding feature of this period was the presentation by the Divisional Commander, Major-General T. Bridges, of medal ribbons to Captain J. Bell, M.C., Sergeant J. Greenway, M.M., and Private A. Cliffe, M.M., on a Divisional Parade held at BULLESCAMP on the 18th August. Many other recipients of immediate awards were unfortunately prevented from attending this presentation parade on account of wounds and sickness.

The end of August found us leaving these restful surroundings for the grim business of war again, all ranks bearing the hall-mark of fitness in their bronzed faces and general smart appearance. Bus and march route brought us on the 29th August to MOULENACKER, near BAILLEUL, having spent one night each at WALLON CAPEL and LENIEPPE. After a week of hard training in attack practice we moved to the line south of ZILLEBEKE, and from the vicinity of HILL 61 viewed the marshes below ZANDVORDE, where we were to advance on the right flank of the next push. Our advance was to be quite a short one, but the nature of the ground (a descent from higher to lower ground) gave the impression that the task would be no easy one. As it turned out the chief difficulty was in finding a foothold in the morass, that had been caused by the churning up during several years shell fire of ground ordinarily marshy, and the complete obliteration of the water-courses.

The usual fully detailed and elaborate plans were made, but later were modified to suit the idea of consolidation in depth more than previously, the desired result being a series of echeloned posts covering all the ground over which the advance was to take place.

The frontage of the Battalion was about 300 yards and the depth about 1,000 yards. On our left a gap of 300 yards separated us from the right of the next Division, this gap being filled by a party of machine gunners under Lieut. Carver. The Divisional objective was a kind of switch connecting the old front line with the far greater advance that was to take place further north.

On the night of September 19th B. Company, under command of Captain Meir, was already in the front line—a few scattered posts 1,000 yards east of KLEINE ZILLEBEKE, whose Company H.Q. (a small pill-box about two yards square) was to become Battalion H.Q. A more unwholesome spot would have been difficult to find, but dug-outs in the vicinity were scarce. The night was dark and rainy, and Companies had the greatest difficulty in getting to their places of assembly, the taped out route to the line having been broken or obliterated; but on the stroke of Zero the last Company arrived just in time to take up its position in the assembly line.

During the night some apprehension was caused by the sound of an encounter between what were obviously enemy parties. A few Huns were discovered later, walking about in our support positions with their hands up, lost and mystified, and anxious for nothing but "Kamaraderie."

At Zero the guns opened fire and the barrage fell 100 yards in front of our positions with marvellous precision and terrific noise. Detailed programmes of its leaps and rests had been distributed, so with the additional help of a compass—a very necessary adjunct in the thick mist which limited vision to a narrow margin—the task of following it was not a difficult one. Numbers had been somewhat reduced by casualties on the way up to the line, and more occurred within a few minutes of the opening of the attack, notably at Battalion H.Q., whose small dug-out received two direct hits, instantly killing seven signallers and runners, the Artillery Liaison Officer and his two lines-men, and wounding our Signalling Officer, Lieut. Barklam, and a number of others who could ill be spared. A few hundred yards from the start of the advance a support line was formed. In front of this the barrage rested for 15 minutes, while smoke shells marked the position, and on this the leading waves were left to consolidate, while succeeding Platoons passed over them to the final objective. Here the mist began to clear somewhat, and it became possible to distinguish such landmarks as "Belgian Wood," whilst away on the left, at a corner of "Shrewsbury Forest," could be seen a large number of steel-helmeted Germans outside a pill-box, being formed up for their march to the prisoners' cage. These were the fruits of 2nd Lieut. Carver's action, and were captured by a gallant rush in the face of machine gun fire from the pill-box, by himself and six men operating a small stunt of their own. 2nd Lieut. Carver gained a bar to the M.C. for this action, and the Sergeant (from another Battalion) who was with him received the V.C. In this one dug-out they captured one Officer, 27 men, and four machine guns.

The attack continued behind the barrage unchecked till the final objective was reached, where posts were established and the line consolidated, whilst shells continued to burst on the ZANDVOORDE HILLS opposite, whence the rattle of machine guns gave signs that life still existed. A few prisoners were taken during the attack, but the enemy was too weak, and the position too indefensible, to allow much show of resistance. The absolute quagmire of the position made the going very slow, and it was a wise prevision that had regulated the pace of the barrage to meet this difficulty.

The new position offered little concealment, being under direct observation, and it was not long before enemy shells made it extremely unpleasant to linger about. One of these found its mark in the trench in which Lieut. Gough was standing, and caused the loss to the Battalion of a greatly loved and very gallant officer.

Casualties during this action were:—Officers, 11. Other ranks, 263. *Killed*—2nd Lieut. Gough, D.S.O., and 51 other ranks. *Died of*

wounds—2nd Lieut. A. F. W. Greaves and 4 other ranks. *Wounded*—Captain F. A. S. Gibson, Captain W. H. Orram, 2nd Lieut. W. H. F. Barklam, 2nd Lieut. F. J. Joels, 2nd Lieut. R. W. Owen, 2nd Lieut. W. Whitehead, 2nd Lieut. A. Buckland, 2nd Lieut. G. S. Carver, Captain G. W. Armstrong, R.A.M.C., and 173 other ranks. *Missing*—35 other ranks.

On the 22nd September we were relieved and moved back to KEMMEL shelters, where the next four days were spent in reorganization, after which we commenced a period of uninteresting but extremely hard work of line-holding alternated with short periods in support and reserve, during which we were constantly employed on working parties. The line was a series of posts located in shell holes, with only very meagre shelter from the wet weather which prevailed about this time. These posts were not approachable by day, and only with the greatest difficulty by night, on account of the churned-up, muddy nature of the ground, which rendered movement very difficult and slow. These conditions, together with the frequent and uncertain ministrations of the Boche gunners, made the spot a most uninviting one and distinctly unhealthy. During periods in support and reserve we were much better housed in the tunnels of "Larch Wood," HILL 60, and "Spoil Bank," where we could dry our clothes and indulge in a little much-needed sleep by day. Nightly working parties provided all the excitement and exercise necessary for the health of the troops, and much useful work was performed, unfortunately not always free from casualties, which totalled about 180 in the period of some six weeks during which we were thus employed.

CHAPTER VI.

CAMBRAI FRONT.

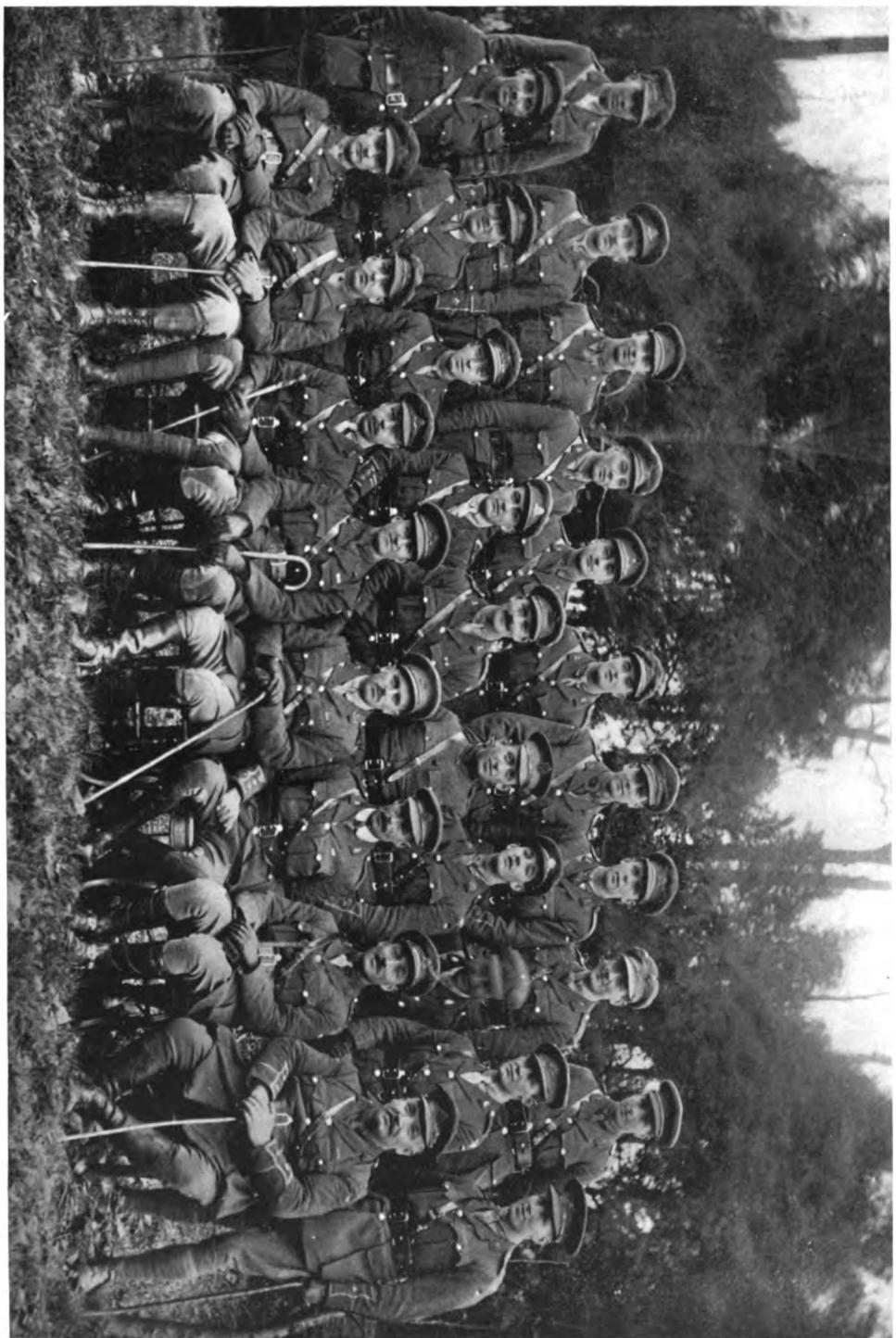
ON the 9th November we were withdrawn from the line, and on the following day commenced a move by lorry and rail to the rest area at LE CROQUET and BLARINGHEM, where we arrived on the 12th November, after spending two nights in the staging area of MOOLENACKER, near BAILLEUL. The next fortnight was devoted to organization and training, and generally smartening up of the Battalion, and much useful work was performed during this period by the Battalion shoemakers and tailors, to whom a word of praise is due. The result of their handiwork was very noticeable in the Battalion which marched from LE CROQUET on the 28th November to undergo a course of target practice in the TILQUES area, after three days of which we marched to new billets at CAMPAGNE, near ST. OMER, where another week was spent in training and recreation.

Many Brigade competitions were instituted, which had for their object general military efficiency. Of these the Battalion was successful in Signalling, Marching, and Transport Competitions, the prize for the last being a silver bugle, presented by the Brigade Commander, Brig.-General T. A. Cubitt. The successful competitors were warmly congratulated by the Brigade Commander, particularly the Transport, who received a special word of praise for the splendid turnout.

We received a rude shock on the 5th December, when orders were received to depart with all haste for the CAMBRAI front, to stiffen the 3rd Army, which had been forced to give up some of the ground taken a short time previously. We entrained at ST. OMER on the 6th December, detrained about midnight and marched to billets in the semi-deserted village of POMMIER, which was reached about 3-30 a.m. on the 7th December. The following day we embussed at BASSIEUX about mid-day, and journeyed through several ruined villages via BAPAUME to LE TRANSLOY, and after a wearisome march in the pouring rain we arrived at a tented camp near the village of ETRICOURT, where an exceedingly uncomfortable night was spent. The following night we relieved a Battalion of the 6th Division in the support position situated in the "Hindenburg Line," near RIBECOURT, and on the night of the 10th we relieved the 2nd Durham Light Infantry in the front line.

This was our first experience of this part of the front, and our early impressions were the reverse of pleasant. We had had an excellent opportunity on the way up of seeing the handiwork of the Hun in the ruined villages as we passed through them, but we only realised how thoroughly the work of devastation had been carried out when we came to a halt and began to search

OFFICERS, 1917.



for some shelter from the elements. There was scarcely a standing wall which could be utilised as a shelter, and all wells had been systematically destroyed. Surrounded by this desolation, emphasised by the arrival of severe frost and snow, we were, to say the least of it, somewhat depressed. It was in circumstances such as these that the efforts of our kind friends at home were appreciated to their fullest extent, the woollen articles being eagerly sought for and worn with kindly thoughts of the donors. It is almost needless to say that the gifts of cigarettes were also fully appreciated. The cigarette might well be termed the soldier's friend, for in the tightest corner he always turned to it, and it never failed to supply the required comfort. During any big action, a visit to the aid post would have revealed many stretcher cases patiently waiting their turn to be dressed, and in every case the inevitable cigarette going. The thanks of the Battalion are extended to its many kind and willing subscribers, the chief of whom were Mrs. Wedgwood and Mrs. Locker, who so ably organised their efforts.

Periods in the line in front of MARCOING, alternated with periods in support in the "Hindenburg Line," periods in reserve in HAVRINGCOURT WOOD, and later at VALULART CAMP, near YTRES. An unusual feature at this period was the fact that, the further you got from the line, the more uncomfortable the billets became. Our first period in the reserve position was spent in tents in HAVRINGCOURT WOOD which had been pitched on a foot of snow followed by a severe frost.

It is not difficult to imagine the discomforts of this situation. However, it was necessary from a health standpoint to withdraw the troops to some place where a bath and a change could be arranged, and the tented camp in HAVRINGCOURT WOOD was the only way out of the difficulty. Our later periods in reserve were spent in VALLULART CAMP, which consisted of Nissen huts, and was made fairly comfortable chiefly by the ingenuity and perseverance of Pioneer Sergeant Phillips and his men, to whom a special word of praise is due.

On the 30th December, at 7-30 a.m., the enemy put down a very heavy barrage on our right and right-centre Companies, and a strong attack was launched with the object of capturing "Welsh Ridge," which was unsuccessful, although some slight successes were gained by the enemy on the front of the 63rd Division. Heavy shelling continued at intervals during the day, which was resumed on the following morning, but without any change in the situation. Casualties were heavy and included:—*Wounded*—2nd Lieut. A. Donald, 2nd Lieut. A. Lindsay, Lieut. F. Clarke, M.C. Other ranks: *Killed*, 15. *Missing*, 2. *Wounded*, 48.

The total Casualty List for the year 1917 is as follows:—

Officers Wounded—

Captain Williams	2nd Lieut. E. J. Joels
Lieut. Deane	2nd Lieut. A. Buckland
Captain G. W. Armstrong (R.A.M.C.)	2nd Lieut. R. W. Owen (1st Battn.)
Captain F. A. S. Gibson	2nd Lieut. G. S. Carver (1st Battn.)
2nd Lieut. J. Bell	2nd Lieut. W. F. Whitehead (3rd Battalion)
2nd Lieut. H. F. Gough	Captain G. W. Armstrong (R.A.M.C.)
Captain C. F. H. Bill	2nd Lieut. P. H. Moss
2nd Lieut. H. C. Maule	Lieut. Davison
2nd Lieut. F. Clarke	2nd Lieut. G. S. Carver
Captain Smith	2nd Lieut. Donald...
Captain G. M. Eaton	2nd Lieut. Lindsay
Captain W. H. Orram (1st Battalion)	Lieut. F. Clarke
Captain F. A. S. Gibson	
2nd Lieut. W. H. F. Barklam	

Killed—

2nd Lieut. R. Shackleton	2nd Lieut. H. F. Gough
Captain A. R. Selfe	Lieut. R. Smith
Lieut. F. C. Boulton	

Died of Wounds—

2nd Lieut. A. F. W. Greeves	
(3rd. Battalion).	

Total:—*Wounded*, 26. *Killed*, 5. *Died of wounds*, 1.

Other Ranks—

Killed	Wounded	Gassed	Missing	Month
6	9	2	1	January
5	14	—	—	February
1	7	—	—	March
8	24	—	—	May
18	108	—	7	June
16	93	—	—	July
12	25	—	1	August
56	189	4	36	September
2	9	4	—	October
15	56	—	—	December
—	—	—	—	
139	534	10	45	
—	—	—	—	

The year 1918 found us in the front line under extremely uncomfortable conditions. The immediate prospects were indeed far from bright. It was common knowledge, and had been so for some little time, that the offensive had automatically passed from us to the enemy, and that the next action we were likely to be engaged in would be a defensive one. There were very few amongst us who realised at the time what the outcome of the altered conditions was likely to be: everyone seemed to look on the new order of things in a philosophical manner, and if the spirit of the troops was affected in any way it was certainly not adversely. The coming "German offensive" gradually became a more and more popular topic of conversation as time went on; but even this paled into insignificance when the topic of Christmas dinner was introduced, this being much overdue and certainly going to be much longer delayed owing to the unwelcome activities of the Boche. But this festival was bound to take place, our Brigadier having promised in most convincing language that it should do so when the opportunity should arise. The Brigadier's promise was, however, not redeemed until the end of February, when we found ourselves at SENLIS near ALBERT.

The outstanding item of interest during this period was the transfer of our Battalion from the 57th to the 56th Brigade, which was rendered necessary by the reorganization of Army Commands. Infantry Brigades which had formerly comprised four Battalions were now reduced to three Battalions. It is no exaggeration to say that all ranks of the Battalion were sorry to part company with the 57th Brigade, with its genial and highly efficient Commander whom we thoroughly understood and loved. We, however, found some consolation in the knowledge that we were not parting company with the 19th Division, but only being transferred to the 56th Brigade of the same Division.

On the 6th of February a Special Order was published as follows:—
"The 8th North Stafford Regiment will from to-morrow, 7.2.18, cease to belong to the 57th Infantry Brigade, and will form part of the 56th Infantry Brigade."

The following are extracts from a letter received by the Commanding Officer, Lt.-Colonel H. W. Dakeyne, D.S.O., from Brigadier-General T. A. Cubitt, C.M.G., D.S.O, commanding the 57th Brigade:—

"DEAR DAKEYNE,

"From to-morrow, I am exceedingly sorry to say, you pass from my command. I am sure you will believe me when I say that I view the parting from you and your Battalion with the very utmost sorrow. Of your Battalion I can only say in all sincerity that it has improved out of all recognition. The Officers are the best in the Division, and both Officers and men have greatly distinguished themselves in every major and minor battle in which they have taken part. Of the actions in which your Battalion has specially distinguished itself I will mention:—

1. First attack on 7th June, 1917, OOSTAVERNE line.
2. Second attack on 7th June, 1917, OOSTAVERNE village.
3. Mopping up of enemy parties on 8th June, 1917.
4. 'Forret Farm,' August 5th, 1917.
5. Attack on 'Belgian Wood' and 'Shrewsbury Forest' on 20th September, 1917.

"In all the above the Battalion did all and more than could be expected of them, and if I am not mistaken you have received more immediate awards than any other Battalion in the Brigade.

"You have also a Field Gun to remind you of June, 1917.

"I am personally glad to think that you have some small memento to remind you all that you were once in this Brigade, namely, a pair of Bugles, so well won by your Transport in November last.

"I wish you all the best of luck, and hope sincerely, when next we fight, that your Battalion may be on one or the other of my immediate flanks.

"Yours very sincerely,

"(Signed) T. ASTLEY CUBITT."

On the 22nd of February we moved back by rail to ALBERT to take our much overdue rest, and to train hard for the forthcoming German offensive.

We marched to SENLIS, where billets were found in barns, etc., a change which was much appreciated by all ranks. A very pleasant fortnight was spent here, which was brightened considerably by occasional visits to AMIENS.

On the 1st of March we celebrated our belated Christmas Day. A gorgeous and heavy dinner was eaten, followed by somewhat lethargic sports in the afternoon, the chief item of which was a freak football match—A. and B. Companies *versus* C. and D. Companies, some 250 a side, with six footballs and four sets of goal posts. This did something to work off the dinner, and the rest of the afternoon was spent in races and competitions of various kinds.

In the evening we were entertained at a concert very ably rendered by the 56th Squadron R.F.C., whose aerodrome was near by. Altogether a very jolly day was spent, thanks to the excellent arrangements made by Captain G. P. Smith and his Committee, and expressions of appreciation were very frequent and sincere. A word of thanks is here due to Colonel Blizzard, T.D., 5th T.F. Reserve Battalion, North Stafford Regiment, who had sent us a large grant of money, which enabled us to add many luxuries to the dinner, which could not otherwise have been included.

On the 7th March our stay at SENLIS came to an end, but we had derived much benefit from it, and it is safe to say that the morale of the troops was excellent. We went back by train from ALBERT to BAPAUME, and thence by march route to BOULANCOURT, where we were accommodated in a hutment

camp on the BAPAUME-PERONNE road. From this camp final training and arrangements were made to fit us for the coming German offensive, which we were warned to expect at any time. Reconnaissances of vantage points were frequently made during this period, and schemes for the counter-attacking of DOIGNIES and HERMIES were worked out, and were found to be most useful in the actual operations later. During the week preceding the 21st March a daily rehearsal of arrangements was made, and defects in the scheme remedied. Everyone was getting bored with the German offensive, and it was with some feelings of relief that we were awakened from our slumbers on the morning of the 21st March by the thunder of artillery. We wanted no telling that the German offensive had commenced. We had been waiting patiently for this, and the opinion of all ranks was that the Boche was going to be sorry for it.

Everyone jumped to the place allotted to him, and in less time than it takes to write it the troops were ready to move off. It was an admirable morning from an attacker's point of view, with a thick mist that obscured everything beyond about a hundred yards, but gave way to a powerful sun during the morning. The only sounds were the distant rumble of the enemy barrage and the counter-barrage of our own guns. Every two or three minutes a long-range H.V. shell would burst near by, chiefly aimed at Corps H.Q., which was a few hundred yards away. Every village, camp, road, or railway was apparently the special mark of some German gun, and very good shooting they did.

The Division was in Army Reserve and was to be ready to meet any situation, or to go to any part of the army front which might require help.

All the morning we stood by anxiously waiting orders, but it was not until noon that definite information came through that a serious break through had taken place, and that the Division was to move forward to counter-attack the village of DOIGNIES, one of the places which had been previously reconnoitred and orders had been issued in advance.

The 56th Brigade moved forward in support of the other two Brigades of the Division to VELU WOOD, and a very gallant attack was made by the 57th Brigade which, however, was only partially successful.

It was during this attack that two V.C.'s were gained by the 57th Brigade, Captain Gribble of the 10th Royal Warwickshire Regiment and Captain James of the 8th Gloucestershire Regiment.

About 11 p.m. orders were received that our Brigade was to move to its left, and take up a position astride the BAPAUME-CAMBRAI road, between FREMICOURT and BEUGNY. This was done, and by daylight we were dug in with good belts of wire in front, some of which had been erected previously.

The 22nd and 23rd were uneventful, except for shelling, and the persistent rumours of the Germans working round our right flank. It is a curious fact that no definite news of the progress of the battle, or the fate of the 5th Army, reached us till we read about it in the London papers about a week later.

On the evening of the 23rd a counter-attack was made on our immediate front by 21 Tanks, which, however, did not seem to have any appreciable effect, as the enemy continued to push on. It was not until daybreak on the 24th that the enemy troubled us by his unwelcome attentions. He delivered a determined attack under a barrage against the line held by us, and succeeded in getting a temporary footing in a farm on the extreme right of the 9th Cheshire Regiment, only to be driven back by their support Company.

During the morning orders came through that we must be prepared to withdraw, as the enemy were almost directly in our rear, having taken BARASTRE and ROCQUIGNY. Definite orders to withdraw to BAPAUME were not received until 2 p.m. The withdrawal was carried out with great difficulty, several determined counter-attacks, had the effect of keeping the enemy at a respectful distance.

It was during this withdrawal that Lieut. A. H. Sillem was killed, and Lieut. G. S. Carver badly wounded and captured.

On arrival at BAPAUME, about 6 p.m., a hasty trench line was dug, which was held during the evening and early night. About twelve midnight it was discovered that the Brigade had no troops on either flank, and about 1-30 a.m., on the 25th, Colonel Dakeyne ordered a further withdrawal to GREVILLERS, where the remaining Brigade of the Division was found digging in. There were a few hours' rest till daylight, during which, to everyone's delight and amazement, rations turned up, together with a liberal issue of rum. The enemy renewed his attack soon after dawn on the 25th, and the whole of this day was a long series of rearguard actions and spirited counter-attacks, continued with a gradual falling back of the whole line, to prevent the army's unprotected flank being turned—back through LOUPART WOOD, across the IRLES road and railway to ACHIET-LE-PETIT. The Germans came on literally in masses, line after line, and they must have suffered heavily from our rifle and machine gun fire. Towards evening the Battalion Headquarters became separated from the Companies, and at midnight got orders to fall back through a fresh Division, the 62nd, to HEBUTERNE, the Companies remaining dug in near ACHIET-LE-PETIT. At daybreak on the 26th HEBUTERNE was hotly attacked by a small party of the enemy; but they were driven off, and in spite of continued attacks all day, and a most determined one at dusk, which penetrated to the western end of the village before being driven back, the enemy were successfully held up and could make no progress. It was during this attack that 2nd Lieut. Haynes was killed.

At about 9 p.m. the four Companies under Major Martin reported their arrival, and at the same time a fresh Australian Division came up to relieve us, for which we were very thankful, as everyone was completely tired out and done up after six days of continuous fighting and marching with practically no sleep whatever.

More than a word of praise is due to the Transport Officer and Quarter-master (Captains Bainbridge and Crewe) for the wonderful way in which, in spite of all difficulties, rations were delivered to the Battalion regularly every day, a record that was not equalled by any other Unit in the Division.

There were many instances in this, as in the first great German offensive, of their spy system; of troops receiving orders to retire from, apparently, British Officers; and also many instances of the old German practice of firing at civilians who had delayed leaving their homes until it was almost too late, and had eventually to escape across country or along exposed roads.

HEBUTERNE proved to be the high water mark of the German advance in our sector; although he made progress further south, his progress was successfully barred at this point by the remnants of this Battalion.

CHAPTER VII.

KEMMEL—MARNE.

WE remained at SAILLY-AU-BOIS, an old friend of ours of a year earlier, until the 29th, when we were suddenly moved by road and rail to the MESSINES sector, which was destined to be the reverse of a rest cure. It was no time for delays: straight into the line from the de-training station (CAESTRE), and the relieved Division were despatched just as rapidly to the south to take part in repelling the German attack. We held the line in support of the 57th Brigade, just east of MESSINES, with the two Companies and Battalion H.Q. at WULVERGHEM, a place well known to many of us, of which, if we needed anything to remind us, evidence was forthcoming in the small wooden crosses near "Daylight Corner."

We were very tired and were hoping for a restful period, as to which we were, however, doomed to disappointment. Reinforcements came up in large numbers, and a fine lot of men too, and by the 8th of April we were up to strength again, and not a bit too soon, for on the 9th we were warned of an attack which the Germans had launched in the BETHUNE sector, south of ARMENTIERES, which on the 10th extended to our sector. At daybreak a heavy bombardment of our front was the signal for the Hun attack on us. The weather was again in his favour, perfectly still with a heavy mist for the first few hours. Very early reports came through that the enemy had broken through the 57th Brigade, and that MESSINES was in his hands. The Battalion was commanded by Major J. G. Martin, M.C., in the absence of Colonel Dakeyne, temporarily commanding the 56th Brigade. An immediate counter-attack against MESSINES was ordered, and A. and B. Companies were sent forward to carry it out. This they did with the utmost gallantry.

Captain W. A. Meir was in command of B. Company, and as Senior Officer took charge of both Companies during the advance.

The whole distance from the ridge at WULVERGHEM, down the hill across the STEENBEEK, and up the MESSINES RIDGE, some 2,500 yards in all, was across country that had been ploughed up and laid bare by many months of shelling. The going was very heavy, and there was no cover. Nevertheless, the two Companies fought their way into the village and halfway through it, only to be thrown out of it again by overwhelming numbers; but not very far, they took up a rough line some 200 yards down the hill, and here Captain Meir organised the position, and sorted out the sadly mixed up Companies, practically single-handed, all but one of the other Officers having been hit.

Soon afterwards A. and B. Companies were reinforced by C. and D. Companies, and the improvised line was reorganised and strengthened, and all four Companies hung on here all day, exposed to heavy shell fire and



CAPTAIN W. A. MEIR.

machine gun fire from the houses on the western outskirts of MESSINES village. There was no cover other than shell holes, and it was while going round the lightly held line, trying to make it more tenable and secure, that Captain Meir was hit by a bullet and killed almost instantaneously.

A. and B. Companies' fine effort to retake MESSINES had cost them dear, Captain W. A. Meir and Lieut. C. Lucas were killed, Lieuts. E. W. Deane, T. Wake, and W. B. Thorley were wounded, and only a very few N.C.O.'s and men were left untouched. To the great sorrow of everyone, Lieut. Wake died the following day, and Lieut. Thorley eleven days later. B. Company were thus left without Officers. Captain Meir, and Lieuts. Lucas and Wake had been with it all their time in France, and their deaths were a particularly heavy loss to those who had served under them in their Company. The three were devoted to each other and to the Company they had commanded so gallantly and well.

In the evening, about five o'clock, a South African Brigade was sent through to us to try to re-take MESSINES, but with little more success, and they too fell back and joined us in the improvised line we were holding. On the following morning the position was unchanged, except that the Division on our right was attacked and lost ground in the vicinity of HILL 63. In the afternoon the enemy put down a very heavy barrage on our line and attacked us from the right flank, but they were repulsed with heavy losses. Captain G. M. Eaton was wounded, and up to this we had lost over 150 N.C.O.'s and men in casualties. The progress which the enemy had made towards HILL 63 on our right rendered our position untenable, and during the night we received orders to withdraw through WULVERGHEM, to concentrate on "Spy Farm," and later to occupy the old army line north of LINDENHOEK, just in front of KEMMEL HILL. There were only a few Officers left at this time in the Battalion, Companies were commanded by 2nd Lieuts. Parr, Jarvis, Stoneman, and D. O. Jones. The enemy still continued to make progress eastward from HILL 63 and towards NEUVE EGLISE, their obvious objectives being KEMMEL HILL and the town of BAILLEUL. On the 15th we were ordered to man the KEMMEL HILL defences. KEMMEL HILL was a point of great strategic importance, being the first of a series of prominent hills which run in a straight line almost due west, and which barred the enemy's advance to the Channel Ports. Colonel Dakeyne had now resumed command, and Major Martin was detached to command the King's Shropshire Light Infantry, another Battalion in the same Brigade. All day long on the 16th the enemy kept up a heavy barrage on the line of trenches held by us in front of the hill, and during the evening he made ground on D. Company's front. Heavy enemy artillery fire continued on the 17th, otherwise the situation was more or less unchanged. The total casualty list was about 70 for the past two days, caused chiefly by long range artillery fire. On the 18th and 19th the situation remained much the same, continuous shelling, but without infantry action.

It was a very trying time, but our main object was achieved. This important position remained in our hands, and on the night 19th/20th was handed over to a relieving French Division. The relief was most difficult for various reasons, chief of which was the language difficulty; but after an apparently interminable delay our French friends intimated their satisfaction with the situation by much gesticulation, and we left them to carry on the good work.

A long march back to WIPPENHOEK followed. The weather turned very cold, and some snow fell during the night, which materially increased the discomfort of the troops on arrival. There was practically no accommodation except a bare field, but it was surprising how quickly the men got to work to improve the conditions, and very soon they had erected some fairly comfortable bivouacs, for which some railway tarpaulins were pressed into service, much to the disgust and annoyance of the R.T.O. Reinforcements of Officers and men (both badly needed) were received here, and on the 21st we marched to a mixed camp of tents and huts near PROVEN, where the next few days were spent in sorting out the troops and in re-organization.

On the 26th of April a sudden night march landed us at OUDERDOM at 3 a.m., when we occupied the billets vacated by the 148th Brigade, in houses in the village. The next fortnight was spent in various movements to support position near DICKEBUSCH and back again, during which some casualties, were incurred, chiefly from artillery fire, including Lieut. R. Spraggins, but we were not again seriously engaged in this sector. On the 12th of May we were withdrawn to a camp near ABELE, where the following congratulatory report was received from General Robillet, commanding the 2nd (French) Cavalry Corps, for past good work, particularly the defence of KEMMEL HILL.

SPECIAL ORDER.

Order No. 423.

2nd Cavalry Corps,
5/5/18.

"The General Officer commanding the 2nd Cavalry Corps warmly congratulates the valiant British Troops who have contributed so heroically to the defence of the HILLS, and by their admirable resistance broken down the efforts of the enemy and barred the road to DUNKIRK. Without cover—under a bombardment of unprecedented violence—under a deluge of poison gas—disputing the way foot by foot with tenacity—they have stopped the repeated assaults of vastly superior forces; and if, at the outset, overwhelmed by numbers, they had to give way, they have, none the less, inflicted on the enemy losses so hard to bear, that his worn-out forces will soon be crushed to the ground.

"This time, once again, the Germans have seen their hopes overthrown.

"France will remember.

"(Signed) General ROBILLET, Commanding C.C."

The period 13th to 16th May was spent in receiving drafts, re-organization, and general preparation for a long move to another sector of the battle front, persistent rumours of which had been prevalent for some days. The enemy shelled the vicinity of the camp on the 16th, and caused 15 casualties, fortunately none of them fatal; the outstanding feature of this incident being that at the time the nearest enemy gun must have been at least ten miles distant.

On the 17th we began what was perhaps the most interesting train journey of the many which were made during our active service. Almost up to the time of entrainment our destination was a matter for speculation. We were, however, much gratified to learn finally that we were going to a part of the CHAMPAGNE country which was entirely new and opened up possibilities of a rest, of which we were very badly in need; but at any rate it would certainly be a change from the mud of FLANDERS. During the last two months the Battalion had experienced the hardest and most perilous time in its history, and probably in the history of the British Army. We had been prominent in both the German attacks, and had lost heavily in both Officers and men. Nobody could therefore deny that the time was ripe for a rest and change of scene. Rumour had it that the 19th Division, which had been several times mentioned in Despatches recently, were reasonably certain to get a rest this time. Why? the sector we were ultimately intended for was renowned as a health resort, where neither side were allowed to fire for fear of hurting each other! Many similar fantastic stories were going the rounds, and lost nothing in the telling. However, we began our journey about noon, on the 17th, from a railway station near PROVEN. It was well known that the journey would occupy about 36 hours. Everyone settled down to make himself as comfortable as the circumstances would allow, full advantage being taken of the warm weather to use the spare open trucks as points of vantage from which to view the scenery *en route*. Halts had been previously arranged, where hot water was supplied for the making of tea, which was very much appreciated by the men. The outstanding incident *en route* was a collision, in which the rear end of our train came off much the worst in an encounter with the engine of the train running behind us, which was being driven by one of our own men of the R.O.D. Everyone was soundly sleeping when they were rudely awakened by the bump, and the sound of vehicles piling themselves up on each other. A delay of several hours was caused, during which we were much amused by the efforts of a French railway official to impress, with many gesticulations, the driver, who remained quite unmoved, with a blank expression on his face, and quietly remarked to his English mate, "What's up with him?" Very fortunately nobody was hurt.

Many places of interest were passed, including DUNKIRK, CALAIS, PARIS, CHATEAU THIERRY, EPERNAY, CHALONS. Everything considered the journey was a very enjoyable one. The detraining station, VITRY, was reached about

1 a.m. on the 19th after a journey of 37 hours. The advance party had arranged to billet in the village of LA CHAUSSEE, a place where the MARNE RIVER and CANAL ran side by side, which proved to be most excellent, far better than any we had yet occupied in France.

A quiet week of training, sports, including aquatic sports, etc., when suddenly the scene of tranquility is changed, our rest cure is interrupted, a sudden order to prepare for a move is received, with not the slightest knowledge of our destination nor idea of what the situation might be on arrival! We guess that Fritz is through again. Are we never going to escape his unwelcome attentions? He seems to be chasing US all along the battle front! Or is it that his breakings through are intelligently anticipated, and we are despatched to that point to stop his advances?

At midnight on the 28th of May a fleet of French lorries arrive, we are "embussed," and we depart for "Goodness knows where!" All night long we travel, with only occasional stops when blocks occur on the road, and daylight reveals the fact that we are travelling in the direction of EPERNAY. We try to appreciate the situation. The enemy has broken through near RHEIMS or SOISSONS we guess. As the morning progresses we meet lots of French civilians escaping to the rear with their worldly possessions on their backs, or on waggons and carts of all sorts, piled up with bedding, with the inevitable old woman and young child surmounting the lot. Occasionally we pass a lorry in the ditch by the roadside, which tells a story of a driver caught snatching forty winks. Later in the morning we pass through EPERNAY, and leaving the road to RHEIMS on our right we pass through the forest of RHEIMS, and eventually halt near CHAMBRECY about 12 noon, where we "de-bus," and after a few hasty verbal instructions we take up position on the ridge near by. As the day progresses intelligence regarding the situation is obtained, and a serious gap in the line is located and filled, and the best strategic positions taken up.

We did not become seriously engaged with the enemy on the 29th, although we were in close touch with him. We were attacked on the morning of the 30th on our front and flanks, which were both entirely uncovered, and under the weight of numbers were compelled to give ground slightly, not, however, without inflicting severe loss on the enemy. Our own losses were also severe, and included five Officers wounded, one of whom was the Commanding Officer Lt.-Colonel Dakeyne, D.S.O. The loss of the C.O. was a severe blow, but with Major Martin available to take command the loss was greatly neutralised. Operations during the next few days took the form of artillery duels, during which a fair number of casualties were incurred, including 2nd Lieuts. Brockhurst and Newham, wounded. This was the situation on the 6th when the enemy made a determined attack on our position, which is described by an eye-witness, one of the few surviving Officers, of the battle.

“At 3-15 a.m. heavy artillery fire was opened by the enemy on the French position on our right, the overlap of which fell on our B. and D. Companies. At the conclusion of the bombardment (about two hours later) the enemy could be seen, in several waves, attacking the French, who were compelled to give ground, which left our right flank exposed. The enemy was not slow to take advantage, and turned his attention to our position in a determined attempt to work round our flank, which was countered by D. Company adopting a position facing more or less half right to the original line. Lewis gun detachments were despatched to the right flank, and did wonderful work. A special word of praise is due to section leaders who so admirably chose their positions. The effect of their work was the means of breaking down this attempt to take us in flank. An attack now developed on the left of our position. C. Company was unable to hold this in check and was compelled to make a fighting withdrawal for some two hundred yards. Although forced back, they still maintained a hold on the key of the position, the MONTAGNE DE BLIGNY, and were thus able to prevent the enemy from exploiting his success on this side. About 1 p.m. the fighting died down, and the Cheshire Regiment were observed forming up to attack the MONTAGNE DE BLIGNY. C. and D. Companies also advanced on their right. Our two Companies succeeded in re-taking our original front line, but the Cheshire were not successful. Under these conditions we were again obliged to fall back. Later this operation was repeated without support. Again the objective was reached, and again we were forced back by weight of numbers. During the second of these attacks 2nd Lieut. Ede, who was commanding D. Company, was mortally wounded. When it was found impossible to do anything further these two Companies dug in about two hundred yards from their original front line.

“This was the situation when the Reserve Battalion of the 56th Brigade, the King’s Shropshire Light Infantry, attacked the main position. They succeeded in re-capturing the whole of the MONTAGNE DE BLIGNY and restoring the original line. It was the excellent work performed earlier by our Battalion that materially assisted the complete success of this operation.

“Later the French troops re-organised and re-took their part of the line in front of the village of BLIGNY. During this operation a number of Germans, who had succeeded in getting to the rear of our position, found their escape cut off, and were made prisoners.

“It was a wonderful day’s work for the Battalion. From the early morning never more than two hundred yards of ground had been lost. Several times the flanks had been left exposed by the line giving way on our right and left, and each time we guarded our own flanks until reinforcements arrived. This was only made possible by the splendid tenacity of all ranks. We had suffered severely during the day, and had very few Officers left. Casualties

included 2nd Lieuts. Ede and Randall mortally wounded, and Major J. G. Martin, M.C., Captain H. Stoneman, Lieuts. Elkington and Channing wounded.

"We were relieved by the 150th Composite Brigade during the night of the 6th, and proceeded to the BOIS DE COURTON to re-organise. Some idea of the severity of the recent losses may be gathered from the fact that Battalions were no longer any use as a fighting unit, having been reduced in some cases to a fighting strength of 200, and in a few to even less. There was still some grim work to be done, and Battalions became Companies, Brigades became Battalions, and Divisions Brigades, and operated as such during the next fortnight, during which time the enemy lay low and made no further efforts to cross the MARNE through the line held by the 19th Division. It may be assumed that recent fighting had made such inroads on the enemy's resources that many of his plans had to be modified at least. The 19th Division may again take credit for barring his way to success."

An Order by the General commanding the 5th French Army Corps, published about this time, is worthy of reproduction.

"The 56th Brigade, under the command of Brigadier-General Heath.

"On the 6th June, 1918, charged with the defence of the important position of the MONTAGNE DE BLIGNY, they maintained position for many hours against the attacks of an enemy in superior numbers, and who had almost surrounded them.

"Obliged by the last attack to give ground, they counter-attacked immediately. This attempt being checked, a new counter-attack, led with magnificent dash by the Battalion in reserve, threw the enemy from the BLIGNY mountain, took thirty prisoners, and re-established entirely the line, which was then maintained, in spite of violent bombardment.

"(Signed) PELIE, Commanding 5th Army Corps."

On the 7th of June Lt.-Colonel Koebel, D.S.O., arrived and took command, and on the 19th of June we handed over the line to an Italian unit, and began a rather long journey back from the scene of hostilities. A halt for one day was made at LE MESNIL, where the French 5th Army Corps Commander presented Croix de Guerre to Officers and men of the Division. It was here that Brig.-General R. M. Heath was presented with the Croix de Guerre on behalf of the 56th Brigade for the gallant work performed by the Brigade on the MONTAGNE DE BLIGNY. This is one of the highest awards that can be made to a formation, and speaks for the gallantry, tenacity, and general fighting qualities of this Brigade. No other Brigade in the British Army ever before had this unique distinction conferred upon it.

On the 20th of June another rather long lorry journey landed us at REUVES, which is in the midst of the MARNE battlefield of 1914, and was allotted to us as a billeting area. Billets were scarce and poor, owing to the destruction of 1914 and the recent inrush of civilians flying from the battle

areas. Some little disappointment was caused by the poorness of the billets. However, we were kept here for about a fortnight, receiving reinforcements, organising, and training.

The following awards were made about this time for gallantry in recent operations:—

Legion d'Honneur Officier—

Lt.-Colonel H. W. Dakeyne, D.S.O.

D.S.O.—

Captain R. T. Eminson, R.A.M.C.

M.C.—

Captain H. Stoneman

Captain D. O. Jones

2nd Lieut. M. G. Randall

2nd Lieut. H. E. Brockhurst

2nd Lieut. C. G. Simons

Croix de Guerre with Star—

Major J. G. Martin, M.C.

Captain A. E. Gore

Lance-Corporal Jackson

D.C.M.—

C.S.M. J. Timmis

Sergeant J. Mannion

M.M.—

Sergeant G. H. Cook

Sergeant S. Aston

Sergeant T. Griffiths

Corporal H. Sales

Corporal H. W. Morton

Corporal G. Hardy

Lance-Corporal F. Harvey

Lance-Corporal J. J. Hand

Private S. Whittaker

Private J. Fletcher

Private J. P. Brooks

Private Ryles

Private G. Howe

M.S.M.—

R.Q.M.S. Jones

C.Q.M.S. Scott

CHAPTER VIII.

BETHUNE—CAMBRAI.

ON the 1st of July we entrained at FERE CHAMPENOISE, *en route* for the British zone. We were thankful in many ways for this change: we had the feeling that we were returning home after being away for a long time on a difficult task. It cannot be said that we were tired of the CHAMPAGNE country, for all who survived the attentions of the Hun were loud in the praise of this country. However, much as we admired our French friends, we preferred our own comrades. There is little to be said concerning the journey, except that we were unable to return by the route by which we had arrived, because the enemy had forced the passage of the MARNE near CHATEAU THIERRY, and was in possession of the railway line which ran through that town. We seemed to miss for the first time the cheery smile of our Colonel during this journey—a loss which gave us a feeling of depression that did not leave us until his return two months later. We detrained at MARESQUEL during the early morning of the 3rd July, and marched to AVONDANSE, and thence the following day to AIX EN ERGNY, where a week of training was spent, during which more reinforcements of Officers and men arrived. A lorry journey on the 13th, and we were at FAUCQUENHEM in the LILLERS area. During the three weeks that followed more reinforcements arrived, and hard training continued, combined with sports and plenty of football. A Divisional Transport Competition about this time provided some keen rivalry between the various Battalions. The ingenuity and continuous hard work of the Transport Sergeant, Sergeant Aston, and the Transport drivers secured premier honours for the Battalion, on which they were congratulated by the Brigadier, who showed his appreciation by presenting us with a silver bugle.

On the 6th of August we again got in touch with the enemy, this time in the LOCON sector, which was well known to us in 1915 as a billeting area, and which had been over-run by the enemy in his rush forward of April, 1918.

During the following two months we were engaged in a continuous effort to harass the enemy, who, finding himself in a bad way owing to the victorious advances of the Allies further south, was engaged in making a withdrawal in our sector. To attain our object a tremendous amount of daylight patrolling had to be carried out, which was an extremely perilous operation, and necessarily entailed serious losses from his well-hidden machine gun nests and snipers. His gunners were also sending over more than an ordinary ration of gas shells, which caused a number of casualties, and necessitated the almost continuous wearing of the gas-mask with its attendant discomforts. With the exception of an occasional withdrawal for a bath and a change, the pressure

was kept up, the line giving way gradually, until the old trench systems of our 1915 acquaintance were reached near NEUVE CHAPELLE, about which time Colonel Dakeyne rejoined and assumed command, much to the delight of all ranks. Operations of a harassing description were intensified, and about the 1st of October our efforts were rewarded by the enemy's forced withdrawal from AUBERS RIDGE, and thus the way to LILLE was made easy. It may be mentioned that this ridge was the principal defence of LILLE, and had been in the enemy's hands from the commencement of the War. It was a veritable fortress of concrete, which had resisted all previous assaults.

It should be observed that the work during the last two months called for the highest courage and devotion to duty, particularly amongst the Junior Officers, N.C.O.'s and men, as this was not a planned attack on a large scale, but was a persistent and continuous nibbling at the enemy rearguards. To establish a post, as per orders, was not often an easy or comfortable operation, considering that the enemy held all the advantages of ground, cover, and chosen positions, and many individual acts of bravery were recorded.

During recent operations the following casualties occurred amongst the Officers:—*Killed*—2nd Lieut. P. L. Thompson, 2nd Lieut. R. H. T. Croney, 2nd Lieut. E. O. Davies, Captain E. S. Davies. *Wounded*—2nd Lieut. D. W. McNeill, 2nd Lieut. R. Ball, 2nd Lieut. H. Gash, Captain A. Lindsay, Lieut. L. A. Gothard. *Gassed*—Captain E. J. Colls, 2nd Lieut. F. W. Carlisle, 2nd Lieut. S. Padden, 2nd Lieut. Staley.

It was not for us to gather the fruit of our hard work and follow on the heels of the enemy through LILLE. Other troops had been detailed for that work. Our presence was required on another field of operations, viz.: the CAMBRAI sector. On the 3rd we were withdrawn from AUBERS, and by means of train and lorry we found ourselves on the 7th in the GRAINCOURT area in reserve to the troops attacking CAMBRAI, and a few days later we were actually billeted in the town, but only for a few days, after which we moved into close support for an attack on HAUSEY, which was captured. An interesting fact about this village is that it was the first village we encountered in which the civilians had not been evacuated by the Germans, and strangely enough the village had been practically in No Man's Land for some days when we arrived. The inhabitants went through a terrifying experience during those days, and were not a little pleased to find themselves free. Many were found to be suffering from gas poisoning. We did not take a very active part in the attack for the possession of HAUSEY, owing to the enemy not showing much resistance.

The enemy was now retiring rapidly under the pressure of our attacking troops, but it was not until the 1st of November that we were allowed to take an active part in the operations. On this day we marched to VENDEGIES (south of VALENCIENNES), and on the 2nd and 3rd we got in touch with the enemy, and took up position near MARESCHES, preparatory to an attack on

JENLAIN and BRY, with a view to driving in the enemy outposts and pushing on as rapidly as possible. Companies were commanded by (A.) Lieut. C. J. Hunter, (B.) Lieut. R. W. Owen, (C.) Captain H. Stoneman, (D.) Captain A. H. Beech.

The attack on JENLAIN was delivered at 5-40 a.m. There was a mist, and progress was slower than was anticipated, the general direction was, however, well maintained. Much gas and H.E. shelling was encountered on the outskirts of the village, which compelled the wearing of gas masks before any further progress could be made. The Battalion advanced with great steadiness through this barrage, incurring many casualties, including four Officers, and on through the village to the first objective, mopping up machine gun posts and prisoners *en route*.

The next advance was 25 minutes late, and consequently had to be made without a protective barrage, the absence of which encouraged the Hun to a show of resistance. From the commencement heavy machine gun fire was met with, and very soon close "pip squeak" fire from a battery just behind BRY. In spite of this the leading Companies pushed on, in admirable fashion, by short rushes, supporting each other with Lewis guns and rifle fire. There was no cover of any kind, and some idea of the difficulty of the task may be obtained from the fact that seven machine gun positions were later seen opposite our front, each with a large pile of empty cartridge cases, close to the WARGNIES-LE GRAND-BRY road alone. Two Platoons, under Lieut. Harris, attempted to work round the left flank through BRY, but were driven back with a number of casualties, including Lieut. Harris, who was, unfortunately, killed. Another Platoon tried to work through WARGNIES-LE GRAND on the right, but were held up by machine gun fire from the hill overlooking the village. A defensive flank was formed towards the village of WARGNIES-LE GRAND, owing to the 24th Division being held up on the river. Over 100 casualties were incurred during this advance, including two Officers killed and two wounded. We had got within 150 yards of our objective, indeed nearer to it than any other Brigade succeeded in doing, but the very stubborn defence the enemy were putting up prevented any further advance being made for the present, and the Companies dug in.

The effects of the gas which had been encountered earlier in JENLAIN were now beginning to tell upon some of the Officers and N.C.O.'s, who had been compelled to take off their masks from time to time.

At 5-30 p.m. orders were received that the advance would continue under a barrage to the WARGNIES-LE GRAND-BRY road, which was carried out with great dash by the support and reserve Companies, who gained their objective without much difficulty. There were, however, a few casualties, including Captain A. H. Beech wounded. The night was quiet and fine. On the 5th of November, at six a.m., the advance continued, the King's Shropshire Light Infantry going on through us under a barrage, and our Battalion following

later on their left as far as the outskirts of LE FLANEGRIE. Among the casualties were Captain F. C. Good and the Rev. J. J. Wallace, the latter unfortunately mortally wounded. During the afternoon the enemy put down a heavy barrage of all calibres, including machine guns. Owing to this, the darkness, and heavy rain, it was not possible to capture the final objective. The night was very wet and cold, which did not add to the cheerfulness of the situation. The attack was continued at 6 a.m. the following morning, and the objective taken with a few casualties. Two sections R.F.A. and eight Vickers' guns were sent up in support, and gallantly took up exposed positions on the ridge. Very heavy machine gun and artillery fire were encountered on reaching this line, and the Companies dug in, in depth, and sent patrols forward across the river. Every endeavour was made, but machine gun fire and snipers along the railway and in the woods behind made this impossible. Two posts were, however, established on the river, and later in the afternoon an N.C.O. and six men of B. Company got across and established a post on the railway embankment. Rain fell in torrents all day, and the going was rendered very heavy. All ranks were by this time almost completely exhausted and wet to the skin. Rifles and Lewis guns had become caked with mud, which it was impossible to scrape off. Companies were much reduced in strength, especially in Officers and N.C.O.'s; D. Company was commanded by a 2nd Lieutenant lent from another Company, whilst his second in command was a Lance-Corporal.

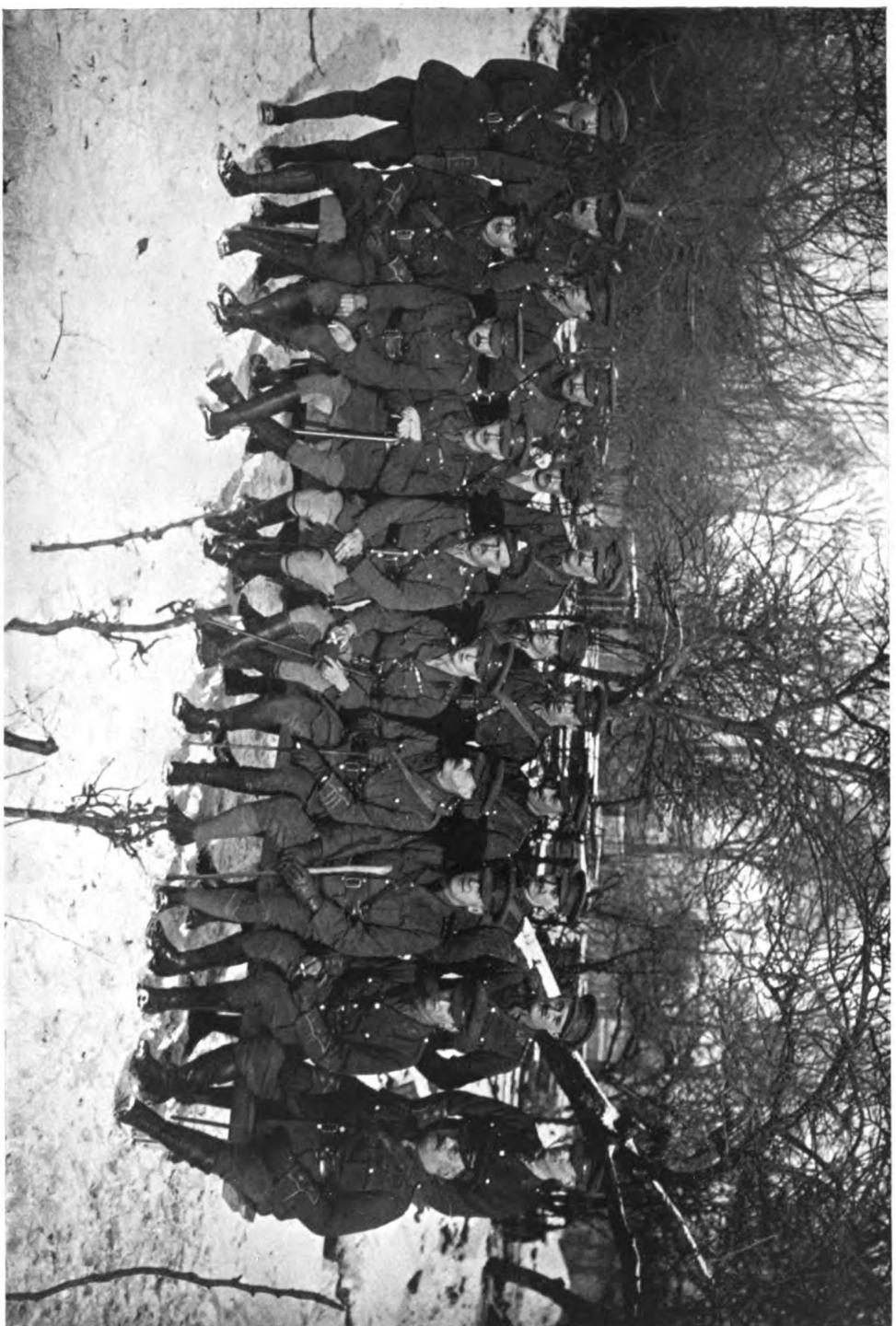
The shelling all day was very heavy, and never for one moment ceased. Orders had been given for the advance to be continued across the river, but half-an-hour before Zero hour this was cancelled, and very thankful we were too, for those in a position to know the circumstances were of opinion that, in face of the opposition the enemy was putting up, the exhaustion of the men, the condition of the arms, the lateness of the orders, and the extremely difficult and wheeling advance we were being called on to make, with very few leaders, the operation would not have had a very large chance of success. Another and most important reason was that by this time the rain had reduced all the Officers' maps to an unreadable pulp.

During the night, which was very dark and wet, we were relieved by the 10th Royal Warwick Regiment and withdrawn to the village of ETH. After one night here of comparative comfort another forward march was ordered. We moved off at 9 a.m. and arrived at LA FLAMENGRIE, where a halt was ordered, and after a few hours the march was resumed, a final halt being called about 5 p.m. at TAISNEIRES, which was the Divisional Reserve position. Two nights were spent here, and on the 10th we commenced a rearward movement, the 19th Division having been squeezed out of action by other Divisions converging on MONS.

On the 10th we arrived at BRY and were billeted there, and the following morning news reached us that hostilities would cease at 11 a.m. The news

on the whole did not cause any outburst approaching the scenes of revelry recorded in the newspapers of the people at home, and beyond an issue of rum nothing in the way of celebration was attempted. Probably, if a census of opinion had been taken at the time, everyone would have voted solidly for going on with the struggle, in order (to use a War expression) "to give him a bit of his own back."

During these operations, 2nd to 9th November, the following casualties occurred:—*Killed*—2nd Lieut. J. Wright, 2nd Lieut. P. L. Tate, 2nd Lieut. B. E. Harris. *Died of wounds*—Rev. J. J. Wallace. *Wounded*—Captain A. H. Beech, Captain F. C. Good, Lieut. W. H. Press, 2nd Lieut. A. L. Sneyd, 2nd Lieut. L. O. Smith, 2nd Lieut. F. Kent, 2nd Lieut. B. T. Wilson, 2nd Lieut. H. Platt.



H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES—WITH OFFICERS.

CHAPTER IX.

DEMOBILIZATION.

THE grim business of War being now over, we had to settle down to the somewhat less exciting Peace routine, and as it had not pleased the Powers to select us for the "Watch on the Rhine" we made our way by easy stages through places well known to many of us, until we finally settled at VILLERS L'HOPITAL, where the first item of interest was Christmas dinner, at which no expense was spared and which was voted a huge success.

The chief occupation of the troops was short exercise parades and educational classes.

The work of demobilization then began, the first lot to leave being a large number of miners on the 30th December.

The following awards and honours were made about this time, in connection with the latest operations:—

Bar to D.S.O.—

Lt.-Colonel Dakeyne, D.S.O.

D.S.O.—

Major J. G. Martin, M. C.

M.C.—

Captain R. W. Owen

Lieut. T. H. Hallsworth

Lieut. C. J. Hunter

Mentioned in Despatches—

Lt.-Colonel H. W. Dakeyne, D.S.O.

Major J. G. Martin, D.S.O., M.C.

Captain A. E. Gore

Captain F. Crewe

M.M.—

11 Other Ranks

D.C.M.—

1 Other Rank

M.S.M.—

5 Other Ranks

The total awards for the year 1918 are as follows:—

Bar to D.S.O.	...	...	1	M.M.	...	...	...	34
D.S.O.	...	...	2	M.S.M.	...	...	...	5
M.C.	...	...	8	Croix de Guerre, French	...	...	...	3
D.C.M.	...	...	3	Croix de Guerre, Belgian	...	...	...	2
Bar to M.M.	...	...	1	Mentioned in Despatches	...	...	...	6

Total casualties for the year 1918 are:—

	Officers—		Other Ranks—	
Killed	Killed	...
Wounded	Wounded	...
Missing	Missing	...
Wounded and Prisoner	...	1	Prisoners	...

The work of demobilization continued steadily during the months of January and February, and it was to a much depleted Battalion that H.R.H.

the Prince of Wales presented the King's Colours in the month of February, 1919. It may be recalled that this was the second time in FRANCE that the Battalion was honoured by a visit from H.R.H., the previous occasion being about two years earlier at COURCELLES. On the 10th of February, at VILLERS L'HOPITAL, the Consecration and Presentation of the King's Colour took place: the Consecration by the Right Reverend Bishop Gwynne, Lord Bishop of Khartoum, Chaplain-General to the Forces in France, and the Presentation by H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.

The Battalion paraded, forming part of the 56th Brigade, on the Brigade parade ground in readiness for the ceremony. The Colours of the 9th Cheshire Regiment and 8th North Stafford Regiment were unfurled by the Seconds in Command of the respective Battalions when the Consecration ceremony was performed.

They were then handed to H.R.H., who presented them to 2nd Lieut. A. G. Bass, 9th Cheshire Regiment, and Lieut. W. H. Press, 8th North Stafford Regiment, who received them on bended knee. The Colour Bearers turned and faced their Battalions, and H.R.H. addressed the troops as under:—

“ Brigadier-General Heath, Officers, Warrant Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, and Men of the 56th Infantry Brigade,

“ It gives me very great pleasure to be here to-day and to have the honour of presenting the King's Colours to

“ The 9th Battalion Cheshire Regiment,
and

The 8th Battalion North Staffordshire Regiment.

“ Both your Battalions form part of ancient Regiments with splendid records of the past. You came out with the 19th Division in 1915 and had your first experience of war at the Battle of LOOS.

“ After that you suffered long apprenticeship in the trenches during the winter of 1915-1916, and distinguished yourselves at the Battle of the SOMME, at the taking of LA BOISSELLE and BAZENTIN, and later on the ANCRE at “Stuff Redoubt” and GRANDCOURT. At MESSINES and at the third Battle of YPRES, in 1917, you both took a prominent part in the fighting. Later you were at CAMBRAI in November, 1917, and in the great German offensives of March, April, May and June of 1918. Both your Battalions and also the 4th King's Shropshire Light Infantry, which joined the 19th Division in February, 1918, covered themselves with glory.

“ Your Brigade has the unique honour of having the Croix de Guerre conferred upon it by our French Allies for its splendid tenacity in the defence and recapture of the MONTAGNE DE BLIGNY on the 6th of June,

1918, an occasion when the prowess of the Brigade earned the praise of the British and the highest praise from the veterans of France.

"Finally, in the victorious British offensive of this last autumn your gallantry and dash in the actions between CAMBRAI and MAUBEUGE were worthy of the great records of your Regiments and of your Division.

"These Colours are the emblems of the heroic deeds which have been performed by your Battalions, and I now entrust them to you, confident that you will always honour and cherish them."

By the middle of February our strength had been reduced so much that it was found impracticable to carry on the normal functions of a Battalion, and the remainder were formed into two Companies under command of Captain B. S. Hancock and Captain J. M. Riddle, M.C. The work of depletion continued, and on the 3rd of April Lt.-Colonel H. W. Dakeyne, D.S.O., relinquished command on being appointed to command the 6th South Wales Borderers, 30th Division, taking with him the good wishes of the remains of the Battalion he had so ably led. By the end of April we were reduced to seven Officers and fifty other ranks, most of whom were required for duty with the Cadre.

There is very little more to be recorded of the doings of the remainder. The Cadre, with vehicles and stores, entrained on the 14th of May, 1919, at CANDAS for LE HAVRE, *en route* for NEWMARKET, which we reached on the night of the 21st of May, only to find that no arrangements had been made for our reception. However, we were not long in arranging for ourselves, and by the aid of a little pressure we succeeded in handing over the whole of the regimental equipment on the 24th of May to a very disconsolate Ordnance Officer, who signed our clearance certificates much against his inclination.

There were still the Colours to be disposed of. Only the troops required for this duty were retained, the remainder were demobilised. On the 25th of May the Colour was taken by Major J. Bell, M.C., and 2nd Lieut. E. M. Channing with three men to LICHFIELD. On arrival at the station they were met by a detachment from the Dépôt, under the command of Captain Young. Headed by the Band of the 1st South Staffords the party marched to the Guildhall, LICHFIELD, where they were welcomed home by the Mayor and Corporation and a large assembly of citizens. Some speech-making followed, in which the Mayor spoke in high terms of the North Staffordshire Regiment, to which Major Bell, M.C., suitably responded. After three cheers had been given at the call of the Mayor the march to Whittington Barracks was resumed. With the handing over of the Colour the 8th North Staffordshire Regiment ceased to exist. This was the inevitable consequence of the passing from War to Peace.

Much has been said in the preceding chapters in praise of the fighting portion of the Battalion, but no record of the Battalion would be complete without some reference or word of praise to the non-fighting portion—the Transport Section and the Quartermaster's Department.

The former was, throughout its career, commanded by Captain A. H. Bainbridge, M.C. He himself was a fine horseman and horsemaster, and his efforts were most ably seconded by the N.C.O.'s and men under him, notably Sergeant Aston and Corporal Sales. Animals, vehicles and harness were always clean and well looked after and turned out, and amid the mud and, generally the heart-breaking stable accommodation they were given, this was no small feat. In Brigade and Divisional Transport Competitions the Transport almost invariably were successful, and they won no less than four silver bugles as first prizes in as many competitions for general appearance and turnout.

The Quartermaster's Department was no less a success. Captain Crewe, O.B.E., was Quartermaster of the Battalion from its earliest days, and a more ably run concern it would be difficult to imagine. To compete with Supply Officers, Mechanical Transport, Ordnance Officers, Town Majors, the Postal Service, Quartermasters of other Battalions, to name some of the many, was no light task, and to say that Captain Crewe competed with them all and usually defeated them is to give him the highest possible praise.

He was more than fortunate in his Regimental Q.M.S. Jones, to whose untiring energy he owed very much. Between them the Battalion was never hungry, thirsty, or lacked clothes, ammunition, or the thousand and one things that are in daily demand on active service.

H.R.H THE PRINCE OF WALES—INSPECTION.



CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

READERS of this History of the 8th (Service) Battalion Prince of Wales' (North Staffordshire) Regiment may perhaps criticise it justly on the ground that it has been a story of uninterrupted successes and no failures—an almost monotonous tale of deeds always well done. Perhaps it is, and the only excuse I can put forward is that in France one always remembered one's good days, and strove to forget one's bad ones as quickly as possible. Life in France during the War, as in most other places in the world, was not always easy and comfortable; without optimism, and the faculty for looking on the bright side even of the worst periods, it would have been impossible. One got into the habit of putting behind one, even eliminating, past horrors, unsuccessful ventures, unpleasant episodes, even the loss of friends and companions. We experienced all of them, as much perhaps as any. But we did not talk of them at the time unduly, or try to remember them.

The perhaps somewhat too glowing account of our experiences in this History is the result, and maybe, is the reason why no contemporary history is ever wholly accurate. Posterity, if it happens to remember us, may have a very different tale to tell.

The idea of publishing this short History of the Battalion originated with Mrs. Wedgwood. It was her husband who raised the Battalion in 1914, and who, after less than two years' service with it, was killed whilst commanding it. It is impossible to say how much the Battalion owed to the devoted efforts of both Major and Mrs. Wedgwood, for she, even after his death, continued her interest in it. Till after its disbandment in 1919 this took the most practical form of continuous and regular supplies of comforts for the Officers and men, the collection and despatch of which she most ably carried out. It was largely on account of this that those of us who are responsible for the issue of this book most gladly took up her suggestion and, with her help, organised its publication.

At the commencement we were faced with what appeared to be an insuperable difficulty—we had, or knew, no one who would write the book. Captain Crewe, however, most unselfishly allowed himself to be persuaded to undertake it. He is a busy man with little leisure, and he was faced with no small task. I should like to record the deep appreciation Captain Crewe has earned by stepping into the breach as he has done, and for the immense amount of time and trouble he has devoted to compiling the book. Without him it would never have been written. His task was considerably lightened by the aid he received from the diary of the late Captain W. A. Meir, whose father very kindly placed it at his disposal, and which contained an intimate

and complete account of the doings of the Battalion from its early days almost up to the time of Captain Meir's regrettable death in action in April, 1918.

Our thanks are also due to those who so generously responded to our appeal for funds towards the expenses of publication.

In writing this "Conclusion" I am faced with two difficulties: one is in having no literary ability, and the other is, not in having nothing to say, but rather in having too much.

The two and a half years which I spent with the Battalion in France were not, as readers of this History may have discovered for themselves, without incident, change of scene, or, I am sorry to say, for the reasons which brought this about, change of companions. All were continually varying. The first two have been described in the preceding chapters, but to any great extent, the individuals, who made the Battalion, have not. It would perhaps seem to be invidious to mention some and omit others. But there were, not only during the time of which I had personal knowledge, but for longer periods in the life of the Battalion, some who were so well known to everyone, who contributed so largely to its success, that no History of the Battalion would be complete without mentioning them. That they were typical of very many others is an added excuse.

There were Captains Bainbridge and Crewe (their names always seem to go together), the Transport Officer and the Quartermaster. They are the only two who figure in the earliest photographic group of the Officers, and also in the last one taken in 1919, the first perhaps a little greyer, the second possibly a little stouter. They were Battalion institutions, and very efficient ones too.

There was Sergeant Needham of the Aid Post, who never, I believe, missed a tour in the line or any action the whole time he was in France, and who very literally died at his post in April, 1918. There was Sergeant Aston of the Transport, and Company Sergeant-Major Allcock of D. Company, and Lance-Corporal Mayhew, my runner and batman, one of those wonderful boys of which the New Army was so full, aged about 19, who were never depressed or worried, or apparently frightened under any conditions, and who seemed to know personally everyone in the Division. He was a cheerful soul, who invariably accosted all and sundry, even old, old men in the Labour Corps, with, "Hullo, Kid!"

There was the Regimental Sergeant-Major, Gardner, imported from the Grenadier Guards, whom everyone pretended to dislike, but didn't really, because it was not the thing for R.S.M.'s ever to be popular. I never envied a man of this rank: it was a lonely and a thankless job, but in our case very well done.

Then there were our three doctors, John, Armstrong, and Eminson, all real "tigers," one of whom got the measles and the other two the D.S.O.

It was largely a matter of luck. There were Regimental Quartermaster-Sergeants Jones and Scott, two very able No. 2's to Crewe, and Sergeant Phillips, the Pioneer Sergeant, who could make almost anything out of nothing.

There was Lieut. Carver, who collected more Immediate Awards for gallantry than any other Officer, N.C.O. or man in the Battalion, and whose childlike face hid a most bloodthirsty disposition; and Captain Stoneman, one of those who, but for the War, would never have found out that at the age of twenty personal example has an irresistible influence on some two hundred companions.

There was a Padré, Wallace, whose two chief hobbies appeared to be the front line and the Regimental Canteen. If he wasn't in the first, he was busy running the second, and it is difficult to say in which locality he was the happier. He finished his part in the War in the first: a true member of the Church Militant. And there were all those others we left in France, so many of them and so young, who gave their lives for the cause of their country and the honour of their Battalion.

We were, I believe, a very happy Battalion, and that always makes for efficiency. A community pleased with each other is always going to try and do its best, and is not going to run the risk of letting each other down. We were also, all the way through, particularly lucky in our Divisional and Brigade Commanders and their Staffs, and we did not fight inordinately with the latter, a matter of no small moment. Our Divisional Commanders, Generals Tom Bridges (now Lt.-General Sir G. T. M. Bridges, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O.) and G. D. Jeffreys (now Major-General G. D. Jeffreys, C.B., C.M.C.) were two of the best soldiers that ever set foot in France. Our Brigadiers ran them close. I do not think that any of us who served under him in the 57th Brigade will ever forget Thomas Astley Cubitt (now Major-General T. A. Cubitt, C.B., C.M.C., D.S.O.), and I know he will forgive me if I say that he endeared himself to us, partly by his language, which was "the limit," partly by his personality, which was outstanding, and partly by his enthusiasm and example, which were inspiring.

We were a shifting population, never the same number for two days together. Old familiar faces suddenly vanished and new ones took their places. Some went away only to re-appear later, patched up and ready for the next "stunt"; many more left, never to rejoin; but all, while with the Battalion, played for it as hard as they knew how. Probably all Commanding Officers think their own Battalion the best, and quite rightly too, but I am firmly convinced that no C.O. can say, more genuinely than I can, that he had under his command a number of Officers and men who were more consistently loyal, keen and efficient. It was easy to see how the majority hated the whole thing: the dirt, fatigue, discomfort, and danger. But never did their dislike of the conditions of war interfere with their determination and efficiency in waging it.

It is difficult to know to whom to give the most honour: the private soldier, who got the worst of everything, in the line or out of it; the Non-Commissioned Officer, who got little better, with more responsibility; or the Platoon or Company Commander, who had to share many of the discomforts and had to face perhaps even more of the dangers, and who, above all, had to set the example, a far more difficult thing than the following of one.

The Senior Officers were, I consider, not in the running. Our life was, comparatively speaking, a bed of roses.

One and all, whatever their rank, and however short a time they may have been with the Battalion, seemed to be animated with an *esprit de corps* and a fixed determination to do their best, that was as inspiring as it was helpful. The job of commanding such was not only easy, it was pure joy, and to everyone who served in the 8th Battalion under me I can never be sufficiently grateful for their loyalty, their friendship, and their co-operation.

H. W. DAKEYNE.

Hythe, 1921.

APPENDIX I.**OFFICERS—HONOURS AND AWARDS.****Bar to D.S.O.—**

Dakeyne, Lt.-Colonel H. W.

D.S.O.—

Dakeyne, Lt.-Colonel H. W.	Emminson, Captain R. E.
Martin, Major J. G.	Gough, 2nd Lieut. H. F.
Armstrong, Captain G. W.	

O.B.E.—

Crewe, Captain F.

Bar to M.C.—

Carver, Lieut. G. S.

Military Cross—

Bainbridge, Captain A. H.	Jones, Captain D. O.
Bell, Major J.	Martin, Major J. G.
Ball, Lieut. R.	Owen, Captain R. W.
Brocklehurst, Lieut. H.	Purves, Captain P. B.
Carver, Lieut. G. S.	Randall, Lieut. M. G.
Clarke, Lieut. F.	Simons, Lieut. C. G.
Gibson, Captain F. A. S.	Stoneman, Captain H.
Hunter, Lieut. C. J.	Snook, Major F. J.
Hallsworth, Lieut. H. S.	Wynne, Captain R. F.
Lowry, Lieut. G. L. B.	

D.C.M.—

Carver, Lieut. G. S. Snook, Major F. J.

Mentions in Despatches—

Armstrong, Captain G. W.	...	2	Gough, 2nd Lieut. H. F.	...	1
Bolton, 2nd Lieut. G. B.	...	1	Locke, Lt.-Colonel W. J.	...	1
Bainbridge, Captain A. H.	...	1	Martin, Major J. G.	...	2
Crewe, Captain F.	...	3	Meir, Captain W. A.	...	1
Dakeyne, Lt.-Colonel H. W.	...	5	Pickard, Lieut. C. E.	...	1
Emminson, Captain R. E.	...	1	Snook, Major F. J.	...	2
Franklyn, Lieut. H.	...	1	Stoneman, Captain H.	...	1
Gore, Captain A. E.	...	1	Tullock, Captain R. P.	...	1

Legion d'Honneur—

Dakeyne, Lt.-Colonel H. W.

Croix de Guerre—

PROMOTIONS

Brevet Lt.-Colonel=

Dakeyne, Lt.-Colonel H. W. Locker, Lt.-Colonel W. J.

APPENDIX II.

WARRANT OFFICERS, N.C.O.'S. AND MEN—
HONOURS AND AWARDS.

Distinguished Conduct Medal—

6750	Amos, C.S.M. J. T.	13175	Kelly, C.S.M. E.
13632	Bailey, Private S.	69740	Mannion, Sergeant J.
14397	Cooper, Sergeant W. E.	43029	Mooney, Private J.
18437	Deaville, Sergeant C. A.	14885	Scott, Private W. L.
9713	Evans, C.S.M. W.	17608	Simmons, C.S.M. J. M.
40828	Greenway, C.S.M. J.	40482	Slaney, Sergeant C. W.
13791	Harrison, Private J. W.	12884	Timmis, C.S.M. H.
17530	Harper, Sergeant H.		

Military Medal—

40791	Abberley, Corporal T. F.	38508	Griffiths, Sergeant T.
13754	Aston, Sergeant S.	13790	Hood, Private H.
12396	Brindley, Private A.	40750	Hayes, Corporal F. A.
12417	Buckley, Private C.	18998	Howe, Private G.
8186	Broomhall, Private J.	23224	Harvey, Corporal G.
14125	Brooks, Private J. T.	40223	Hands, Lance-Corporal J.
29888	Bullock, Private W.	40786	Hardrey, Lance-Corporal F.
12515	Condiffe, Private W. H.	12720	Johnson, Private R.
29806	Cliffe, Private A.	15336	Lovell, Private A.
42661	Cheetham, Sergeant C.	34904	Micklem, Private J.
242135	Catling, Corporal J.	14494	Mellor, Sergeant A.
24071	Chatterton, Corporal A.	6678	Mulliner, Sergeant J.
42706	Cook, Sergeant G. H.	48765	Martin, Corporal H. W.
34814	Davidson, Corporal A.	34862	Noble, Private B.
40784	Dyke, Private F.	14323	Plimmer, Private W.
41669	Daley, Private G.	12966	Pilkington, L-Corporal H.
12596	Follows, Corporal W.	16424	Parry, Sergeant L.
18246	Facey, Corporal F.	40252	Royle, Private R.
24102	Fletcher, Private J.	8522	Rogers, Private E.
242669	Forrester, Private H.	11119	Royles Private G.
40828	Greenway, C.S.M. J.	13720	Smith, Private L.
40403	Gray, Lance-Corporal J. N.	9843	Steele, C.S.M. R.

Military Medal—*continued.*

12839	Sales, Corporal H.	26626	Topham, Private J.
18217	Taylor, C.Q.M.S. F.	242135	Watling, Sergeant J. R.
18411	Tipper, Private G. F.	41278	Wilson, Private A.
28452	Tissington, Private J.	14201	Walklate, Sergeant G.
12895	Till, Private F. V.	19034	Whittaker, Private S.

Meritorious Service Medal—

52371	Darby, C.S.M. A.	12863	Scott, R.Q.M.S. F. T.
—	Gardner, R.S.M. J.	13706	Phillips, Sergeant L.
8907	Jones, R.Q.M.S. J.		

Mentions in Despatches—

13929	Allcock, C.S.M. H.	11923	Pepper, Sergeant E.
34814	Davidson, Corporal A.	17509	Simmons, Sergeant A.
—	Gardner, R.M.S. J.	12819	Sayers, Private T.
8907	Jones, R.Q.M.S. J.	8318	Simpson, C.S.M. A. T.
13175	Kelly, C.S.M. E.	15215	Stanford, Sergeant D. E.
13698	Needham, Sergeant J.		

Decoration Militaire Française—

17508 Godson, Corporal A. A.

Croix de Guerre de Belge—

14177 Mountford, Private H. J. 13698 Needham, Sergeant J.

Croix de Guerre Française—

42659 Jackson, Lance-Corporal F.

PROMOTION for Gallantry in Action—

34814 Davidson, Corporal A. Promoted Sergeant

APPENDIX III.

OFFICERS—DIED OF WOUNDS or KILLED IN ACTION.

1915—

Yardley, 2nd Lieut. F. G.

1916—

Adams, 2nd Lieut. J. H.	Howells, 2nd Lieut. P. G. H.
Bolton, 2nd Lieut. G. B.	London, 2nd Lieut. S. F.
Bunce, 2nd Lieut. H. P.	Line, 2nd Lieut. J. T. A.
Carnegy, Major J.	Lawton, 2nd Lieut. W.
Campbell, 2nd Lieut. E.	Lucas, Lieut. W. H.
Duffy, 2nd Lieut. A. N.	Mackie, Lieut. T. S.
Day, 2nd Lieut. R. F.	Potter, 2nd Lieut. R. F.
Eaddy, 2nd Lieut. C. T.	Saunders, 2nd Lieut. A. G.
Fletcher, 2nd Lieut. W. G.	Standbridge, Captain A. C.
Gwynne, 2nd Lieut. H. L.	Turner, Lieut. E. V.
Henderson, 2nd Lieut. W. D.	Wedgwood, Major C., D.S.O.
Hughes, 2nd Lieut. A. S.	

1917—

Boulton, Lieut. F. C. W.	Self, Captain H. R.
Gough, 2nd Lieut. H. F., D.S.O.	Shackleton, 2nd Lieut. R.
Greeves, 2nd Lieut. A. F. W.	Smith, Lieut. R. P.

1918—

Croney, 2nd Lieut. R. H. T.	Moore, Lieut. T. S.
Davies, Captain E. S.	Randall, 2nd Lieut. M. G., M.C.
Davies, 2nd Lieut. E. O.	Sillem, Lieut. A. H.
Ede, 2nd Lieut. E. D.	Tate, 2nd Lieut. L. P.
Howard, Lieut. G. O.	Thompson, 2nd Lieut. P. L.
Harris, 2nd Lieut. R. E.	Thorley, 2nd Lieut. W. B.
Haynes, 2nd Lieut. C. N.	Wright, 2nd Lieut. J.
Lucas, 2nd Lieut. C. N.	Wake, 2nd Lieut. T. F. N.
Meir, Captain W. A.	Wallace, C.F., J. J.

APPENDIX IV.

DEATH ROLL—OTHER RANKS.

12370 Arrowsmith, Sergt. E.,	K.A. 1915	40486 Bailey, Private C.,	D.P. 1916
21850 Abberley, Private B.,	K.A. 1916	15014 Bailey, Private G.,	K.A. 1916
14343 Abbotts, Private V. C.,	K.A. 1916	40431 Bailey, Private H.,	K.A. 1916
16465 Adams, Private W.,	D.P. 1916	13139 Bailey, Private J.,	K.A. 1916
19283 Allen, Private G. H.,	D.P. 1916	13632 Bailey, Private S.,	K.A. 1916
17487 Allen, Private W. J.,	D.P. 1916	14239 Baker, Private J. A.,	K.A. 1916
12381 Antrobus, Private S.,	K.A. 1916	13026 Bantick, Private T. H.,	D.P. 1916
17336 Archer, Sergeant J.,	K.A. 1916	12479 Barker, Sergeant S.,	D.P. 1916
21509 Arnold, Private J.,	K.A. 1916	40487 Barlow, Private A.,	K.A. 1916
18229 Astbury, Private J.,	D.P. 1916	17568 Barlow, L.Corporal J.,	K.A. 1916
40559 Atkinson, Private J.,	K.A. 1916	12454 Barnett, Private J.,	K.A. 1916
40791 Abberley, Sergeant T.,	K.A. 1917	43054 Barnley, Private J. H.,	K.A. 1916
40430 Alcock, Private E.,	K.A. 1917	15207 Bates, Private J.,	D.W. 1916
40929 Anderson, Private H.,	K.A. 1917	40489 Bell, Private E.,	K.A. 1916
17333 Archer, L.Corp. E. H.,	D.P. 1917	12437 Beeston, Sergeant J.,	K.A. 1916
13354 Ashley, Private T.,	K.A. 1917	12427 Bickerton, Private C.,	D.W. 1916
28618 Asterley, Pte. A. W.,	K.A. 1917	13210 Biddle, Corporal W. H.,	D.W. 1916
12377 Aston, L.Corporal E.,	K.A. 1917	40555 Bladon, Private A. E.,	D.P. 1916
40190 Austin, Private E.,	D.W. 1917	40479 Bloor, L.Corporal J.,	K.A. 1916
40790 Alcock, Private J. H.,	K.A. 1918	16628 Boardman, Private G.,	K.A. 1916
55268 Alexander, Private A.,	D.S. 1918	43057 Bolden, Private W. E.,	K.A. 1916
42718 Allen, Private H.,	D.W. 1918	19293 Boot, Private J.,	D.P. 1916
10081 Allen, Private T. P.,	D.P. 1918	18239 Boote, Private D.,	K.A. 1916
40631 Altoft, Private J.,	K.A. 1918	12414 Booth, Private A.,	K.A. 1916
26614 Ashby, Private F.,	D.W. 1918	17522 Booth, Private A.,	K.A. 1916
12477 Bailey, Private W.,	K.A. 1915	14314 Boston, Private J.,	K.A. 1916
12476 Bailey, Private W. J.,	D.W. 1915	12073 Boulton, Corporal H.,	K.A. 1916
12075 Barker, Sergeant J.,	K.A. 1915	17338 Bradshaw, Private A.,	D.P. 1916
17571 Bentley, Private L.,	K.A. 1915	40416 Brant, Corporal G. H.,	K.A. 1916
11422 Benton, Private S.,	K.A. 1915	16878 Breeze, Corporal J.,	K.A. 1916
14617 Berrisford, L.Corp. S.,	K.A. 1915	13767 Briggs, Private W.,	D.W. 1916
13037 Blagg, Private J.,	K.A. 1915	13645 Bromley, Private H.,	K.A. 1916
13629 Bott, Private F.,	K.A. 1915	18406 Bromley, Private L.,	K.A. 1916
9371 Bryan, Private J.,	D.W. 1915	14211 Brookes, Sergeant L.A.,	K.A. 1916
18232 Bailey, Private A.,	K.A. 1916	12480 Brown, Private B.,	D.P. 1916

16989	Brown, Private E.,	D.W.	1916	55069	Bednall, Private J. G.,	K.A.	1918
12393	Brown, Private S.,	K.A.	1916	40339	Bee, L.Corporal F. S.,	K.A.	1918
17441	Brown, Private W.,	D.P.	1916	51056	Berry, Private T.,	K.A.	1918
15206	Bryan, Private F.,	K.A.	1916	40769	Bingham, Private G.,	K.A.	1918
10783	Bryan, Private H. A.,	D.P.	1916	8548	Birks, Private L.,	D.W.	1918
15203	Bryant, Sergeant W.,	D.W.	1916	40192	Bishop, Private J. P.,	D.P.	1918
40434	Bickerton, Private W.,	D.W.	1916	41657	Blacklock, Private R.,	D.W.	1918
15205	Bull, Sergeant C. W.,	K.A.	1916	42689	Bonnett, Private W.,	D.P.	1918
12402	Bunn, L.Sergeant W.,	K.A.	1916	22923	Bowen, Private J. M.,	D.P.	1918
17494	Burton, Private R. J.,	D.W.	1916	42655	Bowman, Private J. A.,	D.P.	1918
12403	Burton, Private V.,	K.A.	1916	53096	Bowman, Private J. W.,	D.P.	1918
8618	Burrows, Private G.,	K.A.	1916	42667	Bradford, Corpl. A. E.,	K.A.	1918
18909	Butler, L.Corp. W. H.,	D.W.	1916	22988	Brassington, Pte. W. J.,	D.W.	1918
14620	Byrne, Private J.,	D.P.	1916	13630	Brian, Private R.,	D.P.	1918
10213	Bagguley, Private J.,	K.A.	1917	45742	Brindley, L.Corporal A.,	K.A.	1918
29461	Bainbridge, Private W.,	D.W.	1917	55059	Briggs, Private J.,	D.P.	1918
22315	Baldry, Private W.,	K.A.	1917	22269	Brooks, Private J.,	K.A.	1918
40930	Barber, Private A.,	K.A.	1917	22445	Brown, Private H.,	D.P.	1918
12461	Barnes, Corporal E.,	K.A.	1917	24301	Brown, Private J.,	D.W.	1918
13772	Beardsley, Private S.,	D.P.	1917	40638	Bruce, Private S. P.,	D.W.	1918
12423	Bentley, Private G.,	K.A.	1917	41277	Brunt, Private G.,	K.A.	1918
28588	Birch, Private G.,	K.A.	1917	52369	Burns, Private E.,	D.P.	1918
23268	Birch, Private W.,	D.P.	1917	52362	Burton, Private A.,	K.A.	1918
40193	Blackmore, Pte. E. G.,	D.P.	1917	55094	Butler, Private W.,	D.P.	1918
40491	Blakeman, Private R.,	K.A.	1917	42685	Butroid, Private E.,	K.A.	1918
40642	Bloomer, Private S. J.,	K.A.	1917	43056	Buttress, Private W.,	K.A.	1918
40792	Bonson, L.Corporal G.,	K.A.	1917	15208	Caddick, Private W. J.,	K.A.	1915
40730	Boshall, Private H. B.,	K.A.	1917	11726	Colclough, Private J.,	K.A.	1915
40931	Bower, Private H.,	K.A.	1917	12519	Caddy, Private F.,	K.A.	1916
11424	Boydon, Private E. W.,	D.W.	1917	7649	Carr, Corporal J.,	D.P.	1916
7790	Bradbury, Private A.,	K.A.	1917	11728	Carr, L.Corporal E.,	D.P.	1916
40636	Bratton, Private B.,	K.A.	1917	14402	Carr, Private J.,	D.P.	1916
40637	Bray, Private J. W.,	K.A.	1917	24723	Carter, Private E.,	K.A.	1916
14626	Brindley, Private J.,	K.A.	1917	13776	Cartwright, L.Corp. D.,	D.P.	1916
8186	Broomhall, Private J.,	K.A.	1917	18786	Chadwick, Private S.,	D.W.	1916
15010	Brown, Private C., D.S., P.O.W.	1917		13670	Challinor, Private E.,	D.W.	1916
40495	Brown, L.Corporal G.,	D.W.	1917	17301	Chapman, Private J. W.,	K.A.	1916
19458	Bullock, Private H.,	K.A.	1917	13157	Chesters, Private G.,	K.A.	1916
24003	Burns, Private J.,	D.W.	1917	14046	Churmes, Private F.,	D.W.	1916
40496	Burton, Private J.,	D.W.	1917	43013	Clarke, Private W. F.,	D.P.	1916
24155	Byers, Corporal A.,	K.A.	1917	12484	Clewley, L.Corporal J.,	K.A.	1916
8234	Bailey, Private J.,	D.P.	1918	15015	Colclough, L.Sergt. J.,	K.A.	1916
41900	Baxter, Private F.,	K.A.	1918	12112	Colclough, Sergeant W.,	K.A.	1916

43060 Cole, Private A.,	K.A. 1916	14147 Davies, Private G.,	D.P. 1916
12488 Colley, Private E.,	D.P. 1916	11753 Dawson, Private J.,	K.A. 1916
12517 Colley, Private R.,	K.A. 1916	13780 Dean, Private H. R.,	D.W. 1916
40498 Collins, Private E.,	K.A. 1916	9002 Dean, Private J.,	K.A. 1916
13663 Cooke, Private T. H.,	K.A. 1916	18839 Dean, Private L.,	D.W. 1916
13661 Copeland, Private C.,	K.A. 1916	13676 Degg, Private T.,	D.P. 1916
12496 Copestake, Private H.,	D.P. 1916	17237 Devlin, Private P.,	K.A. 1916
13668 Copestick, Private E.,	K.A. 1916	40413 Devon, Private S.,	K.A. 1916
8855 Copestick, Sergeant W.,	K.A. 1916	12534 Dies, Private T.,	D.P. 1916
17235 Cornes, Private F.,	K.A. 1916	13934 Drew, Private W. H.,	D.W. 1916
23215 Cotterill, Private C.,	D.P. 1916	14150 Dunn, Sergeant W.,	K.A. 1916
15492 Cotton, Private R.,	K.A. 1916	12545 Dutton, Private S.,	K.A. 1916
12512 Craddock, Private T.,	D.W. 1916	13677 Davies, Private A. H.,	D.W. 1917
8494 Cubley, Private A.,	K.A. 1916	40207 Davies, Private F.,	D.W. 1917
12527 Cavanagh, Sergeant J.,	K.A. 1917	40062 Davy, Private C.,	K.A. 1917
7994 Chalstrey, Private H.,	K.A. 1917	13201 Dean, Sergeant L.,	K.A. 1917
23218 Chatterton, Private J.,	D.S. 1917	34234 Dolby, Private A.,	K.A. 1917
7624 Clark, Private G. C.,	D.W. 1917	18424 Donkin, Private C.,	D.W. 1917
12524 Clarke, L.Corporal L.,	D.W. 1917	40654 Donkin, Private J.,	K.A. 1917
29853 Clarke, Private W. G.,	K.A. 1917	23849 Dugan, L.Corporal,	D.W. 1917
40442 Cole, Private L.,	D.W. 1917	40655 Dalton, Private J.,	D.P. 1918
8344 Colley, Private G.,	D.W. 1917	30005 Dawson, Private C.,	D.W. 1918
25534 Cooper, Private A.,	K.A. 1917	41964 Dayson, Private M. E.,	D.S. 1918
12495 Cummings, Private H.,	K.A. 1917	23277 Dickinson, Pte. G. R.,	K.A. 1918
24000 Cash, Private T.,	D.W. 1918	23142 Dix, Private W.,	K.A. 1918
13666 Chadwick, Private L.,	K.A. 1918	12542 Dixon, Private J.,	K.A. 1918
29129 Chambers, Private T.,	D.P. 1918	16437 Downward, Pte. G. R.,	D.W. 1918
40201 Clark, Private P. E. J.,	K.A. 1918	40362 Duckett, Private T.,	D.W. 1918
12516 Clarke, L.Corporal J. C.,	K.A. 1918	17460 Dale, Private T.,	D.S. 1919
18990 Cope, Private J.,	K.A. 1918	14296 Edge, Private W. A.,	D.W. 1915
30652 Cox, Private H.,	D.W. 1918	40448 Edge, Private J. H.,	D.P. 1916
52385 Cox, Private J. E.,	D.W. 1918	40504 Edgeley, Private C. E.,	K.A. 1916
13951 Coxon, Private W.,	K.A. 1918	15746 Edgerton, L.Cpl. S. J.,	D.W. 1916
41044 Cropper, Sergeant H.,	K.A. 1918	16474 Ellis, Sergeant G.,	K.A. 1916
12546 Davenport, Private T.,	D.W. 1915	18875 Ellis, Private J. R.,	K.A. 1916
13675 Deaville, Private W.,	K.A. 1915	14152 Ellis, Private W.,	D.W. 1916
40445 Dale, Private H.,	D.P. 1916	12579 Evans, Private L.,	K.A. 1916
14867 Daley, Private A.,	D.P. 1916	12582 Evenson, Private J.,	K.A. 1916
18301 Danks, Private A.,	K.A. 1916	18425 Edwards, Private J.,	K.A. 1917
12543 Davenport, Corporal J.,	K.A. 1916	40215 Elvin, Private S. J.,	K.A. 1917
15725 Davenport, L.Cpl. W.,	K.A. 1916	14869 Evans, Private P.,	D.S. 1917
40502 Davis, Private G. W.,	K.A. 1916	25554 Evans, Private J.,	K.A. 1917
12547 Davies, Private A.,	K.A. 1916	12558 Evitts, Sergeant E.,	K.A. 1917

19261	Edgerton, Private J.,	D.W.	1918	43020	Green, L.Corporal W.,	K.A.	1917
41918	Egmon, Private C.,	K.A.	1918	7849	Grimley, Private J.,	D.P.	1917
40505	Elks, Private C.,	D.W.	1918	9976	Geary, Private H.,	D.P.	1918
11764	Ellis, Private J.,	D.W.	1918	40221	Gibson, Private L.,	D.W.	1918
41906	Entwistle, L.Corp. H.,	K.A.	1918	40668	Gittings, Corporal A.,	D.P.	1918
17238	Foster, Private E.,	D.W.	1915	32040	Gledhill, Private W.,	K.A.	1918
16475	Faulkner, Private A.,	D.W.	1916	52384	Glover, Private H.,	D.P.	1918
43064	Fitten, Private J.,	D.P.	1916	41269	Glover, Private J. R.,	D.P.	1918
43065	Fleming Private J.,	D.P.	1916	17508	Godson, Corporal A. A.,	K.A.	1918
40451	Ford, Private G.,	K.A.	1916	14435	Green, Private F.,	D.P.	1918
19434	Forest, Private J.,	K.A.	1916	12316	Griffiths, Private F.,	D.W.	1918
40506	Forrester, Private W.,	K.A.	1916	15365	Holland, Private J. T.,	Acc.	1914
13936	Foulkes, Private J.,	D.P.	1916	12678	Hackney, Corporal T.,	K.A.	1915
12587	Fullard, L.Corporal C.,	K.A.	1916	11176	Hancock, Private J.,	K.A.	1915
12588	Facey, Private R.,	K.A.	1917	12651	Hand, Private R. T.,	K.A.	1915
11769	Faulkner, Private H.,	D.W.	1917	13186	Harrison, Pte. A., (Acc.)	D.W.	1915
23831	Fraser, Private J.,	D.P.	1917	14445	Hart, Private E.,	D.W.	1915
42703	Footman, Private B.,	D.W.	1918	12696	Hayward, Private G.,	D.W.	1915
14900	Gardner, Private A.,	D.W.	1915	9716	Hindley, Private G.,	K.A.	1915
11001	Guest, Private F. H.,	K.A.	1915	40511	Hackney, Private J.,	K.A.	1916
25035	Garratt, Private W.,	K.A.	1916	40512	Halfpenny, Private H.,	D.P.	1916
10381	Gater, Private T.,	K.A.	1916	40469	Hall, Sergeant J.,	K.A.	1916
6194	Gibbons, Sergeant T.,	K.A.	1916	12677	Hallam, Private A. R.,	K.A.	1916
13684	Goodfellow, Private B.,	K.A.	1916	40514	Hammonds, Pte. C. H.,	D.P.	1916
40453	Goodwin, Private H.,	K.A.	1916	12665	Hancock, Private A.,	K.A.	1916
11206	Gower, Private G.,	D.P.	1916	40457	Hancock, Private R.,	K.A.	1916
13687	Gratton, Corporal J.,	K.A.	1916	17241	Hancock, Private S.,	D.P.	1916
17179	Green, Private J. T.,	K.A.	1916	14456	Hancock, Private W.,	D.W.	1916
9463	Green, Private T.,	K.A.	1916	17377	Hand, Private W.,	K.A.	1916
17481	Green, Private W.,	K.A.	1916	17193	Hardy, Private J.,	K.A.	1916
12620	Griffiths, Private A.,	D.W.	1916	12664	Hargreaves, Pte. J. T.,	D.W.	1916
12621	Grimsdell, Corporal H.,	K.A.	1916	17530	Harper, Sergeant H.,	K.A.	1916
12630	Grindle, Private E.,	D.P.	1916	14877	Harris, Private A.,	K.A.	1916
11324	Grocott, L.Corporal A.,	K.A.	1916	9562	Harrison, Private H.,	K.A.	1916
12632	Grocott, Private W.,	K.A.	1916	18250	Harrison, Private J.,	K.A.	1916
40455	Guest, Private J.,	D.P.	1916	18249	Harrison, Private J.,	K.A.	1916
40570	Gamble, Private W.,	D.W.	1917	19053	Haycock, Private A. R.,	K.A.	1916
26478	Gilbert, Private J. W.,	K.A.	1917	12655	Haynes, Private A.,	K.A.	1916
40836	Goodwin, Private J.,	K.A.	1917	40414	Heapy, Sergeant E. R.,	K.A.	1916
24124	Grant, Private J.,	D.W.	1917	13148	Heath, Private W.,	D.P.	1916
22450	Gratton, Private E. J.,	K.A.	1917	18368	Hemmings, Pte. J. T.,	D.P.	1916
14246	Greatbatch, Private A.,	K.A.	1917	11799	Hemmings, Private E.,	K.A.	1916
40770	Green, Private C. A.,	K.A.	1917	14321	Hemmings, Private T.,	K.A.	1916

14161	Hemmings, Private T.,	D.W.	1916	55073	Hobson, Private G. R.,	K.A.	1918
14462	Higginson, Private A.,	K.A.	1916	40917	Holloway, Private F.,	D.P.	1918
11790	Hill, Private J.,	K.A.	1916	11421	Horton, Private J.,	D.W.	1918
12648	Hillman, L.Corporal G.,	K.A.	1916	40750	Hoye, Corporal F. A.,	D.P.	1918
14036	Hodgkinson, Pte. J. W.,	K.A.	1916	42708	Hunt, Private A.,	D.W.	1918
25321	Holbrook, Pte. H., D. as P.o.W.		1916	41881	Hunter, Private B.,	D.P.	1918
14684	Holdcroft, Private J.,	K.A.	1916	24696	Izzard, Corporal A.,	K.A.	1917
40516	Holdcroft, Private T.,	K.A.	1916	40684	Inger, Private G.,	K.A.	1918
15288	Holland, Private A.,	K.A.	1916	15280	Johnson, Private G. T.,	K.A.	1915
16559	Holland, Private T.,	K.A.	1916	15332	Johnson, Private H. T.,	K.A.	1915
19322	Hollinshead, Private S.,	D.P.	1916	40480	Jackson, L.Corp. W. E.,	D.P.	1916
40484	Hooson, Private J. H.,	K.A.	1916	12710	Jackson, Private J.,	K.A.	1916
22328	Hopkins, Private T.,	K.A.	1916	11085	James, Private S.,	D.P.	1916
15330	Howell, Private C. W.,	D.W.	1916	14165	Jeffries, Private R.,	K.A.	1916
9716	Hughes, Corporal A.,	D.W.	1916	16645	Johnson, L.Corporal T.,	D.W.	1916
11820	Hughes, Private A.,	D.P.	1916	15247	Johnson, Private H.,	K.A.	1916
9254	Hughes, Private W.,	K.A.	1916	12727	Johnson, Private J.,	D.P.	1916
14032	Hulme, Private J.,	D.W.	1916	8063	Johnson, Private W.,	K.A.	1916
24832	Hall, Private J.,	K.A.	1917	17315	Johnson, Private W. H.,	K.A.	1916
27675	Hallam, Private J. L.,	D.P.	1917	40518	Jolley, Private W.,	K.A.	1916
40678	Hardwick, Private J.,	K.A.	1917	40463	Jolly, Private W.,	K.A.	1916
9878	Harley, Private J.,	K.A.	1917	17095	Jones, Private A. E.,	K.A.	1916
12669	Harrigan, Corporal M.,	D.W.	1917	40519	Jones, Private E.,	K.A.	1916
29855	Henshall, Private A.,	K.A.	1917	6052	Jones, Private H.,	D.P.	1916
25398	Hewkin, Private W.,	K.A.	1917	11829	Jones, Private J.,	D.W.	1916
32515	Hodgson, Private S.,	D.W.	1917	26006	Jones, Private W.,	K.A.	1916
24895	Hodson, Private H.,	K.A.	1917	15551	Jones, Private W.,	K.A.	1916
28007	Holland, Private S.,	K.A.	1917	24074	Jack, Private E.,	K.A.	1917
40673	Hooker, L.Corporal F.,	K.A.	1917	17831	Johnson, Private H.,	K.A.	1917
40793	Hughes, Private H.,	D.W.	1917	40462	Johnson, Private H.,	K.A.	1917
16884	Hughes, Private J. T.,	K.A.	1917	11086	Jones, Private A.,	K.A.	1917
11435	Hulme, Private E.,	D.W.	1917	22442	Jones, Private E.,	K.A.	1917
43072	Hurst, Private F.,	K.A.	1917	40094	Jones, Private H.,	K.A.	1917
40456	Hackney, Private J.,	D.W.	1918	40685	Jones, Private W.,	K.A.	1917
40950	Hales, Private C. W.,	D.P.	1918	40752	Jackson, Private C. A.,	D.W.	1918
41245	Hansell, Private A. B.,	D.W.	1918	12163	Johnson, Private S.,	K.A.	1918
42715	Harper, Private J.,	K.A.	1918	11901	Jones, Private A.,	K.A.	1918
40936	Harris, Private T.,	K.A.	1918	29886	Jones, Private F.,	D.W.	1918
41909	Heavey, Private J. E.,	K.A.	1918	40751	Jones, Private G. W.,	D.W.	1918
34842	Henderson, Private G.,	K.A.	1918	13992	Jones, Private J.,	D.S.	1918
31725	Hill, Private I.,	D.W.	1918	40230	Judd, Private W. F.,	D.W.	1918
41270	Hill, Private J. A.,	K.A.	1918	43024	Kearns, Private P.,	K.A.	1916
41259	Hinkman, Private A.W.,	K.A.	1918	43025	Keogh, Private P.,	K.A.	1916

9753	Kerrigan, L.Corporal J.,	K.A.	1916	13802	Mayer, Corporal J.,	K.A.	1916
22191	Key, Private T.,	D.W.	1916	9384	Mayne, Private J.,	K.A.	1916
18371	Kidd, Private G.,	D.P.	1916	43035	McCarthy, Private M.,	K.A.	1916
12729	Kirkland, Private T.,	D.W.	1916	14711	McDevitt, Private E.,	K.A.	1916
8901	Keefe, Sergeant J.,	D.W.	1917	13113	McDonald, L.Cpl. D. T.,	K.A.	1916
40231	Keel, Private A.,	K.A.	1917	17331	Meakin, Private A.,	D.P.	1916
7963	Kelsall, Private A.,	K.A.	1917	17542	Millington, Private H.,	K.A.	1916
40232	Kirk, Private A.,	D.W.	1917	43032	Mitchell, Private J.,	K.A.	1916
34701	Knight, Private J.,	D.P.	1917	24265	Money, Pte. W., D.S. as P.o.W.	1916	
14168	Lovatt, Private F.,	D.W.	1915	17486	Moore, Private H. J.,	K.A.	1916
8310	Lavery, Private J.,	K.A.	1915	43031	Morgan, L.Corporal J.,	D.P.	1916
16600	Lacey, Private A.,	K.A.	1916	14883	Mortimer, Private F.,	K.A.	1916
40465	Lea, Pte. G. B.,	D.W., P.o.W.	1916	19332	Moston, Private H.,	K.A.	1916
15370	Lee, Private R. J.,	D.P.	1916	22326	Moss, Private E.,	K.A.	1916
18689	Lees, Private F.,	D.P.	1916	13840	Moss, Private F. A.,	K.A.	1916
14302	Leese, Private J.,	K.A.	1916	13919	Mountford, Private G.,	K.A.	1916
22314	Lewis, Private W. J.,	D.P.	1916	34884	Machie, Private A.,	K.A.	1917
13800	Lockley, Private S.,	K.A.	1916	13351	Machin, Private T.,	K.A.	1917
11856	Lovatt, Private J.,	D.P.	1916	40975	Mackey, L.Corporal J.,	D.P.	1917
15336	Lovell, Private A. E.,	K.A.	1916	13844	Mahon, Private B.,	D.S.	1917
12742	Lowndes, Private T.,	D.W.	1916	40693	Mansfield, Private G.,	K.A.	1917
40520	Lamb, Private G. E.,	D.W.	1917	40959	Marshall, Private T. W.,	K.A.	1917
18722	Lawton, Sergeant J. H.,	K.A.	1917	40920	Mason, Private C. A.,	K.A.	1917
15028	Lawton, Private L.,	K.A.	1917	12792	Matthews, Private C.,	K.A.	1917
12745	Lilley, Private G.,	K.A.	1917	34855	McCarroll, Private J.,	K.A.	1917
17575	Lane, Private T. J.,	K.A.	1918	34803	McEwan, Private H.,	K.A.	1917
41972	Langdell, Pte. G. W.,	D.W.	1918	24212	McKinnan, Private C.,	K.A.	1917
52779	Law, Private H.,	D.W.	1918	10268	Meen, Private A.,	K.A.	1917
12746	Lawton, Corporal W.,	K.A.	1918	29458	Mellor, Private J. F.,	K.A.	1917
12740	Leese, Corporal J.,	D.P.	1918	14882	Mellias, L.Corporal J.,	K.A.	1917
40566	Lilley, Private E.,	D.S.	1918	40238	Minchington, Pte. W. G.,	D.P.	1917
34338	Lister, Private H.,	D.P.	1918	43029	Mooney, Private J.,	K.A.	1917
50395	Lubel, Private H.,	K.A.	1918	40689	Moore, Private H.,	K.A.	1917
42331	Lumsdale, Pte. W. E.,	K.A.	1918	34899	Morrison, Private J.,	K.A.	1917
12252	Marsh, Private J.,	D.S.	1915	29384	Moseley, Private W.,	D.W.	1917
17196	Mitchell, Private F.,	K.A.	1915	12537	Moss, Private J.,	K.A.	1917
17223	Morton, Private J., (Acc.)	D.W.	1915	40688	Moulds, Private J. R.,	K.A.	1917
13839	Morris, Private T.,	K.A.	1915	42161	Mancktelow, Pte. C. W.,	K.A.	1918
14502	Major, Private E.,	K.A.	1916	41903	Mather, Private J.,	K.A.	1918
16863	Malbon, Private T. H.,	D.P.	1916	48891	McAlpine, Private J.,	K.A.	1918
13696	Malkin, Private H.,	K.A.	1916	40756	McCree, Private W.,	K.A.	1918
17118	Mandley, Private J.,	K.A.	1916	34902	McMorland, Private T.,	K.A.	1918
11878	Mason, Private E.,	K.A.	1916	41260	Mills, Private L.,	D.P.	1918

24243 Monks, Private M.,	D.W. 1918	43076 Pocock, Private T. A.,	D.W. 1916
40467 Moorcroft, Private A.,	K.A. 1918	13707 Pointon, Private J.,	P.D. 1916
29905 Moore, Private F. J.,	D.P. 1918	34873 Paterson, Private C.,	K.A. 1917
42292 Moore, Private W. T.,	K.A. 1918	34868 Penman, Private T.,	K.A. 1917
37066 Morgan, Private H.,	D.W. 1918	28475 Pick, Private W.,	D.W. 1917
41620 Morriss, Private W. F.,	D.W. 1918	40921 Pinden, Private W.,	K.A. 1917
15226 Neville, Private A.,	D.W. 1916	40815 Plant, Private J.,	K.A. 1917
7751 Neville, Sergt., W. H.,	K.A. 1916	12960 Platt, Corporal W.,	D.W. 1917
12776 Newton, Private W.,	K.A. 1916	40477 Palmer, L.Corporal H.,	D.P. 1918
40568 Nicholls, Private J.,	K.A. 1916	40245 Pallister, Private F. A.,	D.P. 1918
15374 Nixon, Private H.,	K.A. 1916	40962 Parsons, Private R.,	D.W. 1918
12775 Noble, Private J.,	D.W. 1916	17165 Paskin, Private D.,	K.A. 1918
40241 Nash, Private G. J.,	D.W. 1917	34871 Paul, Private J.,	D.P. 1918
40960 Neal, Private C.,	D.S. 1917	32558 Peace, Private J.,	D.P. 1918
40567 Newman, Corp. A. C.,	K.A. 1917	11926 Pedley, L.Sergeant J.,	K.A. 1918
13700 Nixon, Private J.,	K.A. 1917	15377 Perfect, Private T. H.,	D.W. 1918
55149 Narborough, Pte. W. G.,	K.A. 1918	41263 Phillips, Private J. L.,	D.P. 1918
13698 Needham, Sergeant J.,	D.W. 1918	14524 Poyser, Private T.,	K.A. 1918
48795 Newing, Private R.,	D.P. 1918	29906 Purton, Private W.,	D.W. 1918
41870 Noblett, Private R.,	D.W. 1918	15849 Reeves, Private P.,	K.A. 1916
40696 Olmy, Private G. H.,	K.A. 1917	18268 Rhodes, Private A. T.,	K.A. 1916
19402 Orton, Private H.,	K.A. 1917	14956 Rhodes, Corporal W.,	D.P. 1916
40968 Overton, Private W.,	K.A. 1917	14748 Rhodes, Private J.,	D.P. 1916
29999 Oakes, Private W.,	D.W. 1918	15214 Richens, Private C.,	K.A. 1916
12983 Paskin, Private S.,	K.A. 1915	14313 Richmond, Private E.,	K.A. 1916
13588 Phillips, Private A.,	K.A. 1915	12991 Roberts, Private J. R.,	K.A. 1916
8033 Page, C.S.M. J.,	K.A. 1916	12401 Robins, Sergeant J.,	D.W. 1916
12967 Palfreyman, Private J.,	D.P. 1916	40530 Robinson, Private R. E.,	D.P. 1916
12962 Palfreyman, Private W.,	K.A. 1916	14181 Ross, Private J. A.,	K.A. 1916
12328 Parkes, L.Corporal J.,	K.A. 1916	40249 Randall, Private S. G.,	K.A. 1917
9317 Parkes, Private G.,	K.A. 1916	50866 Ranger, Private P. G.,	D.W. 1917
17298 Parker, Private T.,	D.P. 1916	34909 Reilly, Private C.,	K.A. 1917
13224 Parr, Private B.,	D.P. 1916	24746 Rich, Private E. J.,	K.A. 1917
13079 Parry, Private A.,	K.A. 1916	40842 Robinson, Private W.,	K.A. 1917
12977 Parsons, Private A.,	K.A. 1916	13000 Rogers, Private G.,	D.W. 1917
9542 Peacock, Sergeant J.,	D.P. 1916	40843 Rowlands, Private E.,	K.A. 1917
9721 Perry, Sergeant J. W.,	K.A. 1916	22374 Rowley, Private G. H.,	K.A. 1917
40524 Pickin, Private A.,	D.W. 1916	40702 Rushton, Private J.,	K.A. 1917
40422 Piper, Private G. T.,	K.A. 1916	50660 Ramsden, Private J.,	D.S. 1918
13705 Plant, Corporal W.,	D.P. 1916	41876 Rayner, Private F. J.,	D.W. 1918
11930 Plant, Private C.,	K.A. 1916	40757 Redford, Private A.,	K.A. 1918
13435 Plant, Private G.,	D.P. 1916	34715 Redsall, Private W.,	K.A. 1918
14323 Plimmer, Private W.,	K.A. 1916	34910 Reilly, Sergeant J.,	K.A. 1918

13005	Rhodes, Corporal W.,	K.A.	1918	13244	Stonier, Private H.,	D.P.	1916
42746	Roberts, Private C.,	D.P.	1918	14939	Stringer, Private S.	K.A.	1916
34719	Roberts, Private G. L.,	D.W.	1918	23457	Swindale, Private G. D.,	K.A.	1916
40922	Roberts, Private N.,	K.A.	1918	12831	Sammons, Private H. H.,	D.P.	1917
22332	Robson, Sergeant B.,	K.A.	1918	40572	Sargeant, Private J.,	D.W.	1917
55071	Roebuck, Private J.,	D.W.	1918	28090	Saunders, Private A.,	K.A.	1917
40817	Rowley, Private E.,	K.A.	1918	34721	Saunders, Private A. E.,	K.A.	1917
48896	Ross, Private G. A.,	K.A.	1918	12247	Sedgley, Private J.,	Gas.	1917
34720	Rudd, Private W.,	D.W.	1918	50877	Shaw, Private T. H.,	K.A.	1917
14185	Sutton, Private C. W.,	D.S.	1914	34927	Simpson, Private R.,	K.A.	1917
14567	Smith, Corporal G.,	D.W.	1915	16456	Small, Private J. T.,	K.A.	1917
12827	Smith, Private E. W.,	D.W.	1915	11957	Smith, Sergeant G.,	K.A.	1917
17412	Stanfield, Private W. J.,	D.S.	1915	40820	Smith, Corporal P. H.,	K.A.	1917
13814	Stone, Private R.,	K.A.	1915	40779	Smith, Private L.,	K.A.	1917
12256	Salt, Private F.,	K.A.	1916	24690	Spendlove, Private A.,	K.A.	1917
18553	Sandback, Private W.,	K.A.	1916	40706	Stevens, L.Corp. T. W.,	K.A.	1917
40532	Scothern, Private H.,	D.P.	1916	29053	Stevenson, Private G.,	D.W.	1917
43078	Sephton, Private J.,	K.A.	1916	40258	Stokes, Private W.,	K.A.	1917
24602	Sergeant. L.Corporal E.,	K.A.	1916	40708	Stoneystreet, Pte. E.,	D.W.	1917
12840	Sergeant, Private J.,	K.A.	1916	50661	Stringer, Private J.,	D.P.	1917
14550	Sharpe, Private D.,	D.W.	1916	8127	Swift, Private G.,	K.A.	1917
16397	Shaw, Private A.,	K.A.	1916	50330	Say, Private C. A.,	K.A.	1918
17497	Shaw, Private G. H.,	K.A.	1916	42767	Scott, Private J. W.,	K.A.	1918
15029	Shelley, Private J. H.,	D.W.	1916	51032	Self, Private W. J.,	D.P.	1918
17093	Shemilt, Private T.,	K.A.	1916	42753	Senescall, Private G. A.,	K.A.	1918
17548	Shipley, Private J.,	K.A.	1916	50663	Severn, Private H.,	D.W.	1918
13812	Shuker, Sergeant W.,	K.A.	1916	42059	Shepherd, Private M.,	K.A.	1918
18613	Shutt, Private J.,	D.W.	1916	12860	Sherratt, Sergt. G. H.,	D.W.	1918
15216	Sickerson, L.Corporal,	D.P.	1916	50648	Shinn, Private G. F.,	D.P.	1918
13723	Siddall, Corporal W.,	K.A.	1916	14188	Shipley, Private F. J.,	D.W.	1918
12865	Simcox, Private T. E.,	D.W.	1916	50452	Shipman, Private W.,	D.P.	1918
40471	Simpson, L.Sergt. H. H.,	D.P.	1916	52370	Shirtcliffe, Private C.,	K.A.	1918
13724	Simpson, Private H.,	K.A.	1916	40481	Shore, Corporal T.,	K.A.	1918
13815	Simpson, Private R.,	D.W.	1916	38421	Simms, Private G.,	K.A.	1918
24601	Sims, Private L.,	K.A.	1916	37602	Sizer, Private A. S.,	K.A.	1918
43039	Smashfield, Pte. A. J.,	K.A.	1916	41910	Smith, Private S. E.,	D.P.	1918
43040	Smith, Private H.,	K.A.	1916	41878	Smith, Private F.,	K.A.	1918
15635	Spruce, Sergeant H.,	D.S.	1916	13720	Smith, Private L.,	K.A.	1918
12816	Stannier, Private J. T.,	K.A.	1916	40533	Smith, Private R.,	D.S.	1918
11968	Steele, Private E.,	K.A.	1916	48182	Smith, L.Corporal S.,	K.A.	1918
15855	Steele, Private E.,	K.A.	1916	23474	Smith, L.Corporal W.,	D.W.	1918
10653	Steele, Private G. L.,	K.A.	1916	52420	Snutch, Private R.,	D.W.	1918
18692	Stone, Private P.,	D.W.	1916	41922	Stainthorpe, Private S.,	D.P.	1918

22331	Stanton, L.Corporal A.,	K.A.	1918	12883	Taylor, Private J. T.,	D.W.	1918
9843	Steele, C.S.M. G. W.,	D.P.	1918	48446	Thompson, Private B.,	D.P.	1918
52379	Stephens, Private S. C.,	D.W.	1918	12892	Thorley, L.Corporal C.,	D.W.	1918
8109	Stubbs, Private J.,	D.P.	1918	28458	Tissington, Pte. J. W.,	D.W.	1918
40925	Summerfield, Pte. R. H.,	D.W.	1918	11480	Tonkinson, Private W.,	D.S.	1918
41271	Sutton, Private W.,	D., P.o.W.	1918	48786	Turk, Private A. F.,	K.A.	1918
41293	Swain, Private H.,	K.A.	1918	48800	Tye, Private P. S.,	D.W.	1918
42952	Sykes, Private J. H.,	D.W.	1918	40760	Unsworth, Private W.,	D.P.	1917
49421	Scrivens, L.Corp. W. V.,	Dwd.	1919	47622	Udall, Private E.,	D.P.	1918
9185	Thomas, L.Corp. W.,	D.W.	1915	22763	Valentine, Private J.,	K.A.	1916
14886	Thorpe, Private F.,	D.W.	1915	14889	Vernon, Private S.,	D.W.	1916
14888	Thorpe, L.Corp. A.,	D.S.	1915	40547	Vernon, Corporal G. H.	D.W.	1917
12914	Turner, Private F.,	D.W.	1915	43799	Vause, Private W.,	D.W.	1918
18617	Tams, Private F.,	D.W.	1916	9707	Warren, Private T.,	D.S.	1914
14312	Tart, Private W.,	D.P.	1916	17427	Warren, Private J.,	D.W.	1915
40538	Tew, Private W.,	K.A.	1916	12937	Warriow, Private T.,	D.W.	1915
40554	Thompson, L.Sgt. A. W.,	K.A.,	1916	14206	Waddell, Sergeant G.,	K.A.	1916
17518	Thorburn, Private J.,	K.A.	1916	12925	Walsh, Private J.,	K.A.	1916
12890	Thorley, Private H.,	D.P.	1916	14595	Walton, Corporal F.,	K.A.	1916
12891	Thorneycroft, Corp. C.,	D.P.	1916	22359	Walker, Private E. A.,	D.P.	1916
40540	Tierney, Private J.,	D.P.	1916	18635	Walker, Private J.,	D.P.	1916
12800	Tomkinson, Pte. W. B.,	K.A.	1916	16319	Wall, Private W.,	K.A.	1916
17421	Tongue, Private S.,	K.A.	1916	12944	Wallbanks, Private J.,	D.P.	1916
13824	Tooth, Private G.,	K.A.	1916	18810	Waltho, Private G.,	K.A.	1916
14190	Try, C.Q.M.S. J.,	K.A.	1916	18266	Ward, Private R.,	K.A.	1916
40542	Tunstall, Private S.,	K.A.	1916	11165	Waring, Private B.,	K.A.	1916
10185	Tunstall, Private T.,	D.P.	1916	17464	Weston, Private P.,	D.W.	1916
40543	Tunstall, Private W.,	K.A.	1916	19181	Windridge, Private H.,	D.P.	1916
18275	Twigg, Private H.,	D.W.	1916	12930	Williams, Private D.,	D.P.	1916
40759	Taft, L.Corporal R. R.,	D.W.	1917	14202	Williams, Private E.,	K.A.	1916
24313	Talbot, Private P.,	K.A.	1917	27655	Willis, Private H.,	K.A.	1916
40710	Tatham, Private V. B.,	K.A.	1917	9274	Wilson, R.S.M. A.,	K.A.	1916
29885	Taylor, Corporal T.,	D.P.	1917	16463	Wood, Private C.,	K.A.	1916
25619	Taylor, Private F.,	D.W.	1917	40563	Woodford, Pte. G. W.,	K.A.	1916
43109	Taylor, L.Corporal G.,	D.P.	1917	9903	Woodings, Sergeant C.,	K.A.	1916
34931	Telfer, Private J.,	K.A.	1917	17225	Wright, L.Corp. J. W.,	D.P.	1916
50455	Tester, Private V. G.,	K.A.	1917	50407	Wakefield, Private H.,	K.A.	1917
40826	Thomas, Sergeant G.,	K.A.	1917	34739	Walker, Private G.,	K.A.	1917
23607	Tombling, Private T.,	D.W.	1917	40549	Walker, Private J.,	K.A.	1917
30711	Timmis, Private J. T.,	K.A.	1917	50496	Wally, Private W.,	K.A.	1917
18217	Taylor, C.Q.M.Sgt. F.,	D.W.	1918	50333	Watson, Private H. A.,	K.A.	1917
18091	Taylor, L.Corporal A.,	D.W.	1918	50405	Watson, Private J.,	K.A.	1917
34733	Taylor, Private F.,	D.W.	1918	50670	Webster, Private C.,	D.W.	1917

34941 White, Private G.,	K.A. 1917	42523 Watson, Private E.,	K.A. 1918
23484 White, Private W.,	K.A. 1917	40953 West, Private C. W.,	K.A. 1918
14892 Whitham, Private W.,	D.W. 1917	6933 Westwood, Private E.,	D.W. 1918
29844 Wilks, Private L.,	K.A. 1917	41279 Whitehead, Pte. R. P.,	D.W. 1918
34848 Wilson, Private D.,	D.P. 1917	23207 Williamson, Private J.,	K.A. 1918
34945 Wilson, Private J.,	K.A. 1917	41289 Willmont, Private A. C.,	D.W. 1918
40717 Wood, Private M.,	K.A. 1917	61220 Willoughby, Pte. G.,	K.A. 1918
9573 Wood, L.Corporal E.,	K.A. 1917	47917 Wilmore, Private G.,	K.A. 1918
40720 Woodhouse, Private G.,	K.A. 1917	50355 Wilson, Private A.,	D.W. 1918
28027 Woodhouse, Private H.,	K.A. 1917	41953 Wodsworth, Private H.,	K.A. 1918
12926 Wright, Private L.,	D.W. 1917	42711 Woodruffe, Corp. J. G.,	K.A. 1918
10496 Wright, Sergeant F.,	K.A. 1917	16076 Woodward, L.Corp. R.,	D.W. 1918
34897 Waddell, Private T.,	K.A. 1918	42288 Wyeth, Private F.,	K.A. 1918
47803 Walker, Private L.,	D.W. 1918	15889 Yates, Private T.,	D.P. 1916
39071 Waltho, Private A.,	D.P. 1918	17376 Yeomans, Private J.,	D.W. 1916
50777 Ward, Private A.,	D.W. 1918	23910 Young, Private J.,	K.A. 1917
27192 Ward, Sergeant G.,	D.P. 1918	46963 Yates, Private J.,	K.A. 1918

D.W. = Died of Wounds.

K.A. = Killed in Action.

D.P. = Death Presumed

D.S. = Died of Sickness

Acc. = Accident.

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